

A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns surrounds the text. The border is composed of repeating motifs of flowers and leaves, creating a classic, elegant frame.

EARLY AMERICAN  
HANDWRITING

SPENCERIAN  
SCRIPT

AND

*Ornamental  
Penmanship*

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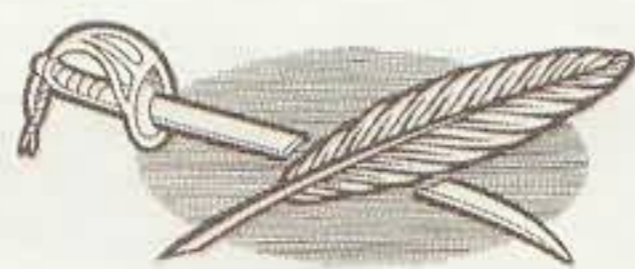
MICHAEL R. SULL

VOLUME ONE











Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime  
And departing leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time.

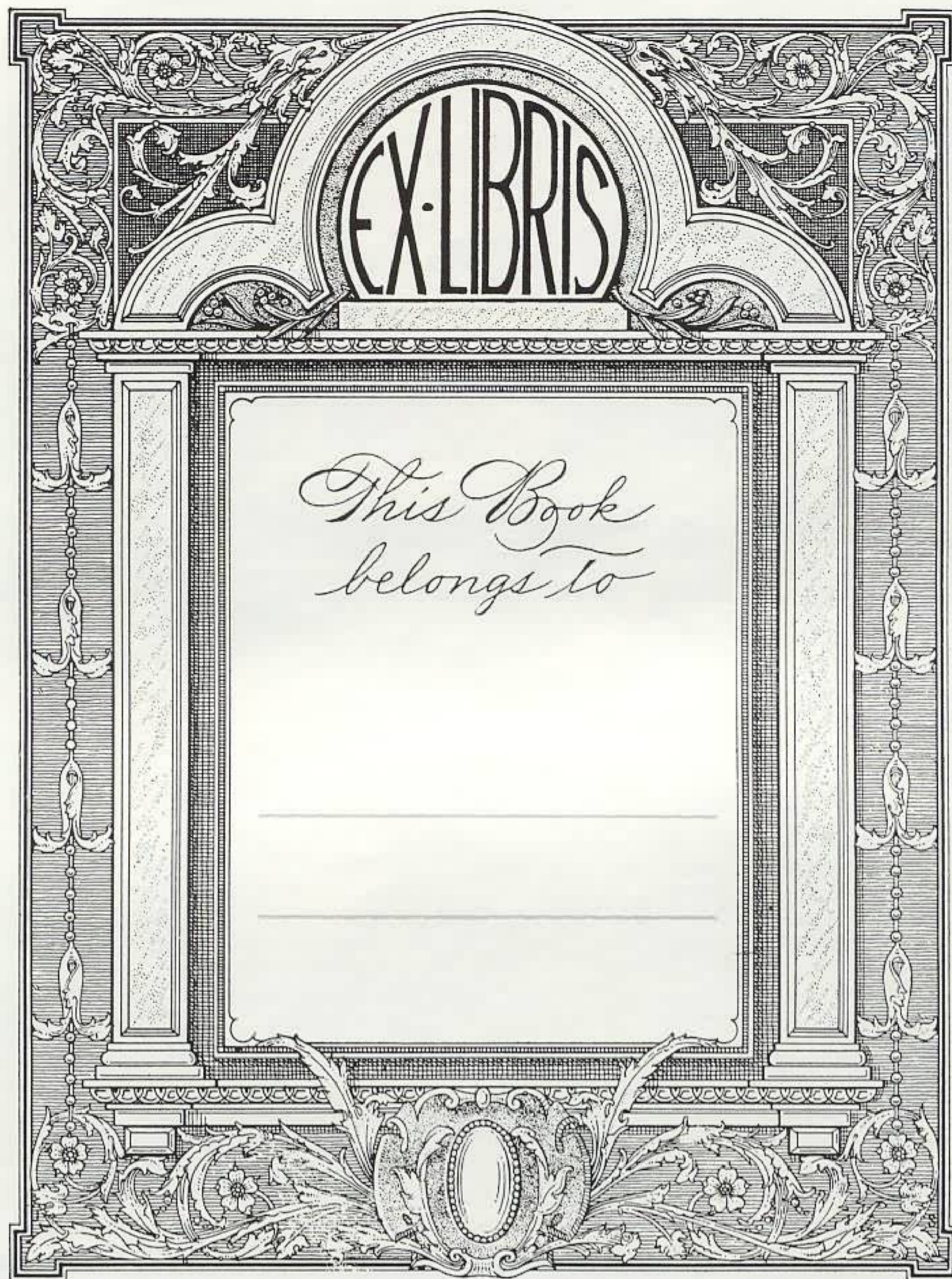
*Script by Q. E. Harris.*

*H. W. Longfellow.*

For Isaac Weldon Bullock, David P. Fairbanks,  
and Paul H. O'Hara.

—from a grateful student





Michael Sully  
1-11-'93





Portrait of Platt R. Spencer courtesy Valparaiso University Museum of Art.

4020  
The Dove  
The dove the dove that bore Old Joe  
Which was't an thoughts of you;  
Through its bold trainings oft a quill  
Our thoughts still freely pour?  
Spencer



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## BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILES

### AUTHOR'S NOTE

For me, the efforts involved in the creation of this text, from its inception through its completion, have been a personal tribute to my three teachers: Isaac Weldon Bullock, David P. Fairbanks, and Paul H. O'Hara. Mr. Bullock was my first instructor, introducing me to the oblique penholder and the beauty of Copperplate (Roundhand) script. Regarding my long-time mentor and friend, David Fairbanks, I fondly recall our close association over the years, from the countless times I studied engrossing under his tutelage, to the period when he assisted me in forming the Tidewater Calligraphy Guild. Lastly, it is with equal respect that I mention the venerable penman, Paul H. O'Hara. As a living link to the "Golden Age," Mr. O'Hara shared with me the techniques of ornamental writing that he had learned seventy years ago at the Zanerian College of Penmanship. During our time together, he frequently spoke of his experiences from that early period in his life, recalling his teachers, colleagues and acquaintances. His dialogue filled me with a sense of wonder about the penmen and their lives. Remembering these thoughts, I realize that his inspiration was—and remains—as important to me as the significance of his instruction.

For their guidance and patience, I am forever in their debt, and it is with sincere gratitude that I dedicate this work to them.

—MRS—





## Paul H. O'Hara

Veteran penman Paul H. O'Hara was born on February 16, 1889, in Alma, Michigan. Throughout his life, Paul has been an advocate of personal fitness, and even today at the age of 101, he continues to do exercises. He has been a faithful follower of the Bernard McFadden physical culture system (an early 20th century conditioning routine resembling shadow boxing) for 80 years. He has never smoked nor drank intoxicants.

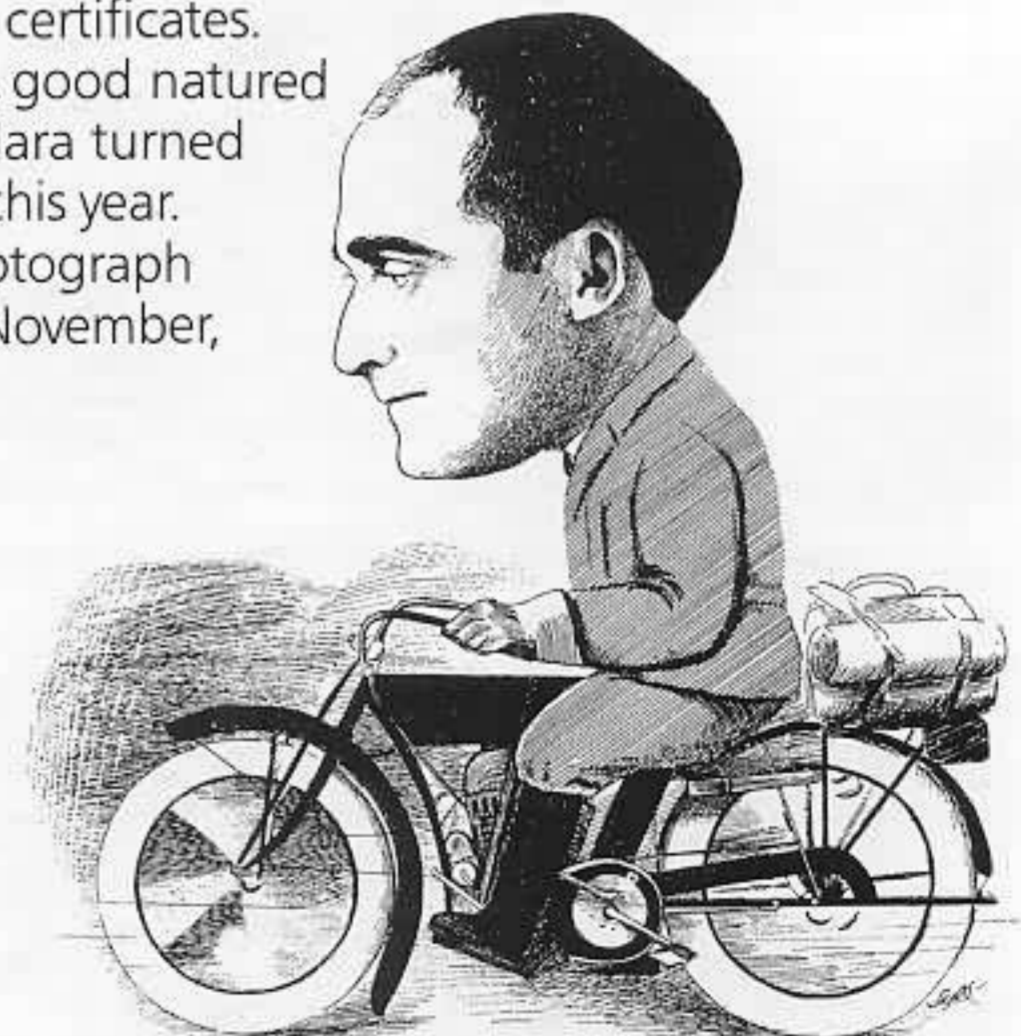
Shortly after the turn of the century, Paul was enrolled in the Commercial Department of the Ferris Institute in Big Rapids, Michigan. Here his training in penmanship began under the guidance of master penman Alva M. Wonnell. In 1908, Paul entered the Zanerian College of Penmanship in Columbus, Ohio. While studying there he received instruction from C. P. Zaner, E. L. Bloser and H. L. Darner. Among his fellow students were many pupils who, like Paul, were destined to become legendary penmen: Willis A. Baird, John Stryker, Earl A. Lupfer and F. W. Martin. In his two years at the Zanerian he mastered Business Penmanship, Ornamental Penmanship, Text Lettering, Engrossing and Engrosser's Script. As a penman, Paul's Business Writing ranked among the best in the profession, and he has long been known for his outstanding E. C. Mills' style of penmanship.

After graduating from the Zanerian, Paul commenced upon his career as a teacher of penmanship and other business related subjects. Over the next eleven years he taught in high schools and business colleges in South

Carolina, Massachusetts, New York and Virginia.

In 1921, he accepted employment at Maury High School in Norfolk, Virginia. He taught mathematics there for 33 years, retiring in 1954. During his long tenure at Maury High, Paul also designed the diplomas and filled them in for a number of the high schools in the Norfolk public school system. In the course of his career, he filled in more than 75,000 diplomas and certificates.

An amiable, good natured man, Paul O'Hara turned 101 years old this year. The above photograph was taken in November, 1988.



Well known penman, Paul O'Hara, Greenville, S.C., by W. D. Sears, Drake College, Jersey City, N.J.

Appeared in *THE BUSINESS EDUCATOR*, January, 1914





## Isaac Weldon Bullock

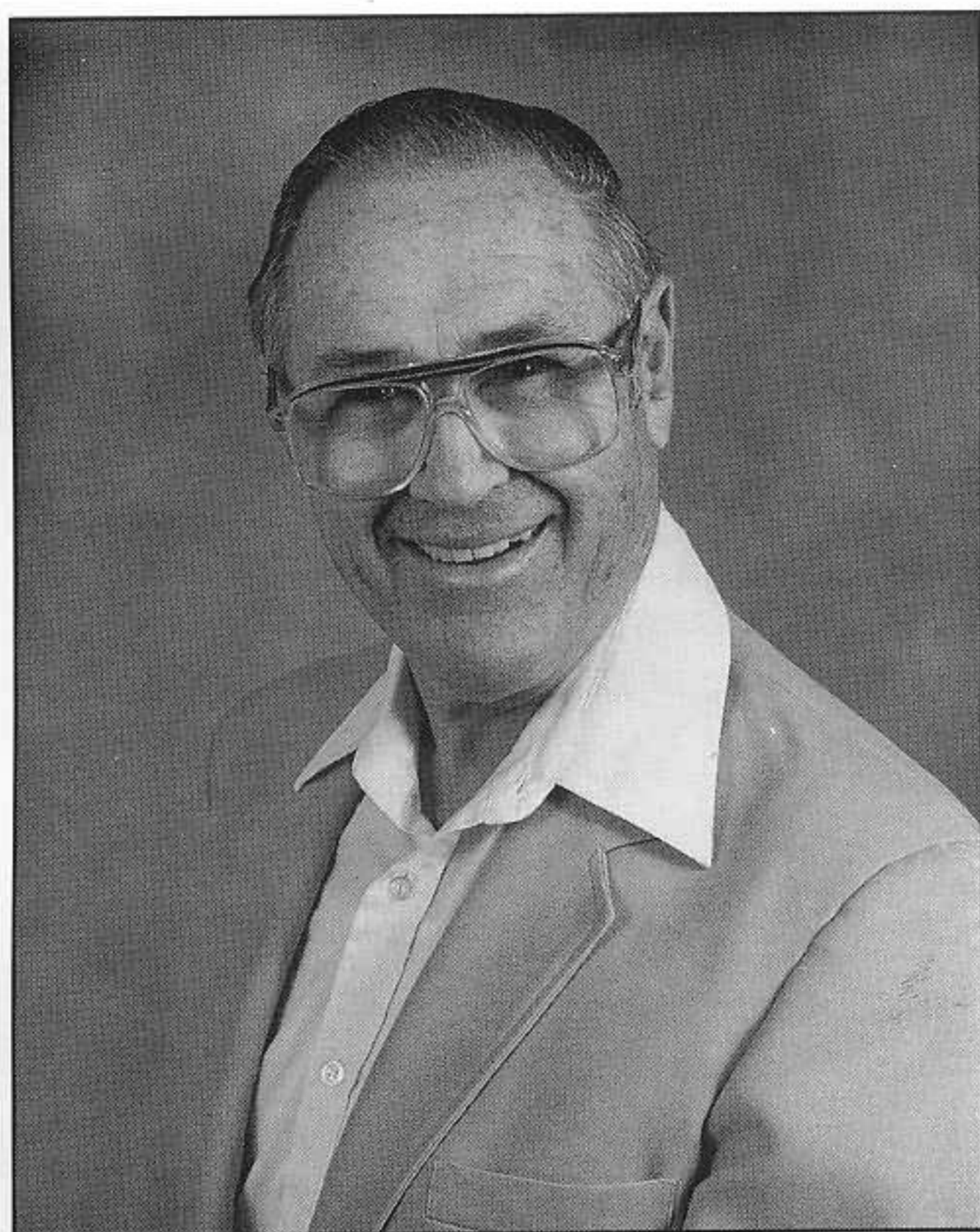
Born on Christmas Day, 1915, I. W. Bullock is a native of Creedmoor, North Carolina. After graduating with Phi Beta Kappa honors from Duke University in 1937, he went to work for famous strongman Bob Hoffman, and his strongman team that traveled around the country, putting on weight-lifting demonstrations and promoting York brand barbells. Naturally athletic as a youth, "I. W." set a weight-lifting record in 1933 when he "cleaned and jerked" 308 pounds. From 1940 to 1950, I. W. earned his living as a beer salesman, first for the Krueger Company and later for the Rupert Brewery. During these years he became a portrait artist, and was known for his realistic renderings. In 1950 his interests turned to the field of photography, and he opened a photographic studio in the Norfolk-Durham area of Gravel County, North Carolina. Entirely self-taught, I. W. became proficient in various photographic disciplines, especially that of photo retouching. Through this skill he learned hand control, a valuable asset years later when he practiced calligraphy.

In 1954, I. W. Bullock secured employment in the County

tax office that was located next to his photography shop. He became a tax collector, then a tax supervisor and auditor, serving his county in these positions for 25 years until his retirement in 1979.

Upon his retirement, Mr. Bullock became interested in calligraphy. He began teaching himself the art by studying the Speedball textbook. Old English and Copperplate held a particular fascination for him. He wrote to the Zaner Bloser Company for further information and purchased a number of their oblique penholders. As time went by, I. W. worked to improve the design of these unique penholders. He succeeded in developing oblique penholders that were more versatile than any on the market, as his could hold penpoints of all sizes, including crowquill points. In the past ten years, Mr. Bullock's heavily shaded lettering and "ob-holders" (as he calls them) are known to calligraphers throughout America. He has taught numerous classes in Copperplate lettering, and continues to devote much of his time to this form of calligraphy.





## David Parish Fairbanks

Born in New York City in 1913, David became an international traveler at the age of eight when his father accepted employment as an administrator of an arts academy in Rome. The Fairbanks family moved to the historic city, planning to live there for six months, and stayed for 19 years. In addition to working at the academy, the senior Fairbanks became a successful portrait painter in Rome.

While living in Europe, David received schooling in several disciplines. He attended schools in Italy, England and Switzerland, and, with the help of his father, learned to draw and illustrate. He also studied design and became fluent in French, Spanish and Italian. While in Rome, David became interested in calligraphy when a friend who was studying medieval manuscripts stayed with the Fairbanks family. She would bring home pictures of the manuscripts, and he was fascinated with the intricate detail and beauty of the art.

In the early 1930's, David returned to America for a brief period and lived in New York. Having always enjoyed dancing, he obtained a job as a ballroom dancing instructor. During this time, he also attended the famed Julliard School in New York, taking various courses in piano instruction. In his spare time, he played the ukelele for fun—and still does!

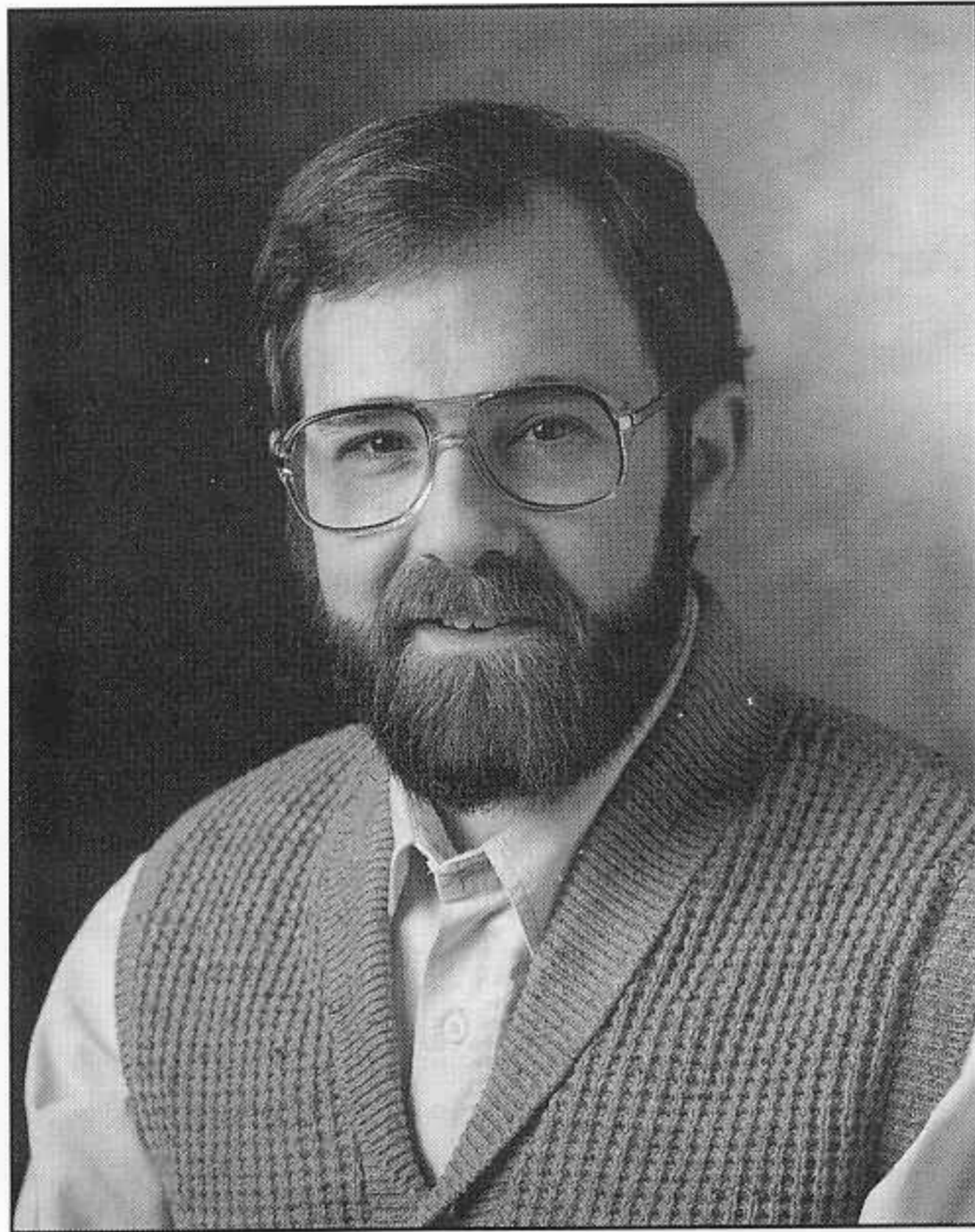
In the early 1940's David enrolled in a drafting school, and this line of work became his profession. He worked as a

draftsman for a number of companies, eventually accepting a position in one of the design departments of the Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company in Norfolk, Virginia. Some years later he took a position as a draftsman for the Southeastern District Planning Commission in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and remained in their employ until his retirement in 1979.

In addition to Fairbanks' career, throughout the years he has maintained a calligraphic studio known as The Scriptorium. Although he is proficient at a number of broad-pen alphabet styles, he enjoys the discipline of engrossing most of all. Studying from the *Zanerian Manual of Alphabets And Engrossing* and the works of famed engrossers Alberto Sangorski and Arthur Szyk, David developed a style characterized by traditional composition, extreme detail in decoration, and dramatic use of color. His work exhibits a masterful sprinkling of filigree throughout border treatments, and the liberal use of gold to accent prominent features in the design.

A charter member of the Tidewater Calligraphy Guild (Virginia Beach, Virginia), David Fairbanks continues to produce work of an exceptional quality while freely sharing the techniques of his skill with his fellow guild members.





## Michael R. Sull

A native of Buffalo, New York, Michael R. Sull was born February 25, 1949. He attended and graduated from both the New York State College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and Syracuse University in 1971, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry. After graduation he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, performing navigational duties as quartermaster onboard the U.S.S. Pawcatuck throughout the Caribbean, the Mediterranean Sea, the North Sea, and the Barents Sea. Upon his discharge from Service, Michael began a career in youth-service work, first as a professional Scout with the Boy Scouts of America for five years, and then two years with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Department, as an urban 4-H Agent. It was during these post-Navy years that Mr. Sull began studying calligraphy and trained under Messrs. Bullock, Fairbanks and O'Hara. In 1979 he founded the Tidewater Calligraphy Guild in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and in 1981, joined the staff of Hallmark Cards, Inc. in Kansas

City, Missouri as a Calligrapher/Lettering Artist. In 1986 Michael left Hallmark Cards and started his own company, The Lettering Design Group, a studio specializing in ornamental penmanship, calligraphy and commercial lettering design. He has taught at calligraphy guilds throughout the United States and Canada. In 1987, he organized and developed the Spencerian Saga, an intensive week-long workshop devoted to Spencerian Script and Ornamental Penmanship. Conducted annually at Geneva-on-the-Lake, Ohio, the "Saga" attracts participants from states and provinces across North America. In 1989, Mr. Sull displayed a large portion of his penmanship collection in a major exhibition held in Kansas City, Missouri. It is the only exhibition of its kind available for public viewing. Married and the father of one daughter, Jenny, he enjoys being with his family and writing (as well as reciting) ballad-style poetry.



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## ADDENDUM

### Recalling A Penman

—Michael R. Sull—

*It was just a night not unlike tonight  
In a faintly quiet town,  
Where tales are told of heroes bold  
And men that Destiny found—  
A dreamy place with a lamp-lit face  
And maybe a beer or two,  
And a few old souls of varied roles,  
Not unlike me and you . . .*

The old penman's desk is quite a mess,  
It's a saddening sight to see—  
There're cobwebs about and without a doubt  
It's a place that used to be.  
Old penholders lay every which-way  
And pen-points lay in rust,  
No penman's there in that weathered chair;  
It's covered deep in dust.  
A tender breeze moves the trembling trees  
I see through the windowsill,  
And as the dusk settles in and the night begins,  
Everything's quiet and still.  
The wind stirs the drapes into mis-shapen shapes  
And whispers with a sigh,  
Yet I swear I can hear some voices quite near  
Discussing a time gone by.

And there in the night, by the back porch light,  
Were some folks who spoke of old lore  
Of famous names of penman fame  
From an age of years before.  
For gathered there with a dream to share  
Were calligraphers, sippin' tea,  
Who spoke of the trade the Old Masters made  
And the way it used to be.  
There was a disputation in their conversation  
As they talked each other's tales,  
And the words were boomin' about the greatest human  
Who penned the earth's great trails.

"Twas that old geezer, C.P. Zaner,"  
Said a man amidst the din  
As he wiped the sluice of tobacco juice  
That dribbled down his chin.

"When I think of who *was*, I'd say *Madarasz*,"  
A voice piped through the haze,  
"That stuff he wrote sure got my goat—  
I'll always give him praise!"  
"Well, what about Kelchner or Elmer Bloser?"  
Said one as his pipe was lit,  
"Or that fabulous pair of Dennis and Baird,  
Now that I think of it?"  
"Good Lord, you're all wrong!" said one in the throng,  
As he crossed his hands on his chest,  
"You forgot Francis Courtney; why, he most certainly  
Was far and away the best!"  
"So, who could it be?" asked two or three  
As more names came to sound:  
"DiGesare with his unmatched sway,  
Or the peerless E.L. Brown?  
Behrensmeyer or Flickinger;  
Gosh, the pens they would wield!  
Or that flourishing great—I can't hesitate,  
Who else but Fielding Schofield?  
There were Mills and Tamblyn, Hinman and Canan,  
And what about Chester Cook?  
There was Palmer and Lehman, Norder and Dakin . . ."  
And the names were all read like a book.

Well, they went on and on til near the dawn  
And the list was growing long;  
The celebrated all were rated  
And then a voice said: "Boys—you're wrong!"  
A gent stood up who refused the cup  
Whom the young there didn't know,  
And as he rose to stand, he gripped my hand,  
Then he spoke out, soft and slow.  
"Greetings, boys!" he said with poise,  
"O'Hara is my name,  
And I've heard each word of who's preferred  
In finding penmen of fame.  
Now bend an ear to an old pioneer  
Who was here in nineteen-eight,  
And I'd like to say, in my own crude way,  
*Who* fills the bill as 'great.'  
We could dwell for days on the diverse ways  
The famous won their fame,  
Many a life is filled with strife  
In seeking just a name.



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Oh, we could take a look in the 'Who's Who' book  
For notables existing,  
There are pages vast from the ages past  
Where heroes have their listing  
Who, large or small, short or tall  
Were known for accomplished feats;  
Yes, the list grows long in poem and song  
Of the historically elite.  
But now for a minute or two I'm asking you  
To let me have *my* say  
And I'll let you know how, long ago,  
A great man came to stay.

"Yessir, he was a pauper, broke, with an empty poke  
And not a penny to own,  
But he stood on the sand with a stick in his hand,  
Learning letters all alone.  
He had no riches or fancy britches  
Or snazzy social grace;  
He had but a yen, this man among men,  
To find but his own special place.  
His fame wasn't brought by the fights he fought  
—In the ordinary sense—  
But the things he taught were those long-sought  
And of the greatest consequence.  
In a fledgling land where hope was grand  
With promise abound for all,  
He'd selflessly fight to teach us to write  
With ovals, both big and small.  
He was also a man in the Lord's command  
And he wrote of the beauty he saw  
In a leaf of a tree or a wave on the sea  
And the creatures that live in God's law.  
With his words of choice and pen and voice  
He lectured time and again  
And he often spoke of the terrible yoke  
That slavery puts upon men.  
Through his numbered days he paved the way  
For our nation to write and write *well*;  
He formed the rules that led to the schools  
Of which the hist'ry books tell.  
Yessir—he was great; he's the one who should rate  
For 'twas he who started it all,  
From the best to the worst, the last to the first,  
He's in the Great Legion's Hall.

So think about that!"—and he doffed his hat,  
And calmly went out for some air,  
And he left the crowd, not speaking aloud,  
Only looking as each person stared.

"Well, who was that man?" one person began  
As he stood up in sudden attention,  
"It's sure a sin" the rest chimed in  
"His name was only mentioned."  
"Boys," I said as I scratched my head,  
"Some great men once were obscure;  
That hist'ry preacher was my old teacher,  
And a master he was to be sure."  
And as I rubbed my eyes, I said "I'm surprised  
At all of you tonight,  
You should all remember—it was P.R. Spencer  
Who taught us how to write.  
Oh, it's certainly true there were students who  
Penned more carefully, still,  
But they followed *his* creed in practice and deed,  
And it happened because of *his* will.  
It was years before on Lake Erie's shore  
He started that era so grand  
That brought forth an art from his mind and his heart  
And put pens in everyone's hand.  
And whoever you call 'the best one of all'  
From now til the sun doesn't shine,  
In that primary place is but Spencer's face,  
With the others all trailing behind.

So go now, and practice with paper and pen  
And make your old ovals again and again  
Til your muscles are all but asleep,  
And then say a prayer—for he'll hear you up there,  
So he knows what he gave us will keep.

*Yes, it was just a night not unlike tonight  
In a faintly quiet town,  
Where tales are told of heroes bold  
And men that Destiny found—  
A dreamy place with a lamp-lit face  
And maybe a beer or two,  
And a few old souls of varied roles,  
Not unlike me and you . . .*



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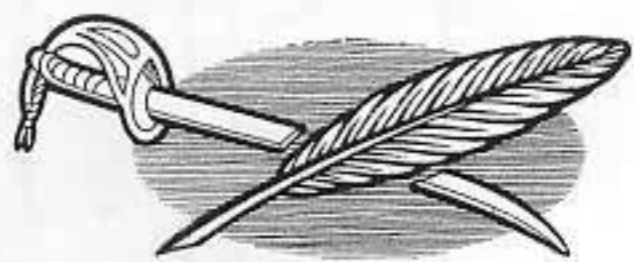
CLINTON H. CLARK  
AND WIFE, ANNA

Among the most skilled of master penmen, Clinton Clark's expertise in the art of off-hand flourishing was legendary. His distinctive work in penmanship inspired two generations of students, earning for him an admirable reputation. His avocational interests included reading and marksmanship. He owned a rifle and a pair of twin revolvers which he used in target shooting. Mr. Clark possessed a cultured disposition, and maintained an extensive library in his well-furnished apartment. Further information on this penman can be found on page 150. This photograph of Mr. and Mrs. Clark was taken around the turn of the century.

Photograph and artwork  
courtesy of Mr. Clark's niece,  
Alice Clark.









SPENCERIAN  
SCRIPT

AND

Ornamental  
Penmanship

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MICHAEL R. SULL



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No project of this scope is the result of a single person's efforts. Since the time five years ago when I began drafting the initial manuscript for a book on Spencerian Script, it has been my privilege to work with a devoted group of individuals who gave both their energies and their spirit to the task. Truthfully, it was only through a combination of their talents that it became possible for this work to be self-published, without compromise of content or design.

I especially wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to the following people:

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**Gael Nordness.** As design and art director for the entire project of this two-volume set, Gael's expertise and experience in the field of graphic design, production art, and illustration was invaluable. Her skills at coordinating all phases of the production process with assistant artists, editors, photographers, printers, typesetters, and other vendors were exemplary. For her professionalism and dedication, I shall remain truly and personally most thankful.

**Doreen Sull.** I am deeply indebted to my supportive wife, who took over so many home, parental, and business responsibilities, thereby allowing me the time I needed to work on this book.

**Wendy Cook, Jan Powell, Debra Rapp and Doreen Sull,** my studio assistants, for editing, production art, and helping me catalog, organize and select the artwork from my collection for the book.

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The history of the United States is so extensive that many geniuses within their field of endeavor are not well-known to the public. Innovators in the history of penmanship in America fall into this category. The millions of Americans who have learned, taught, loved, and preserved the skill of handwriting are rarely aware of the total dedication of others before them.

This volume, *Spencerian Script and Ornamental Penmanship*, gives us all an extensive look into the lives and characters of the penmanship masters. From Platt Rogers Spencer to A. N. Palmer, we are transported to a bygone era of elegance and time-honored craftsmanship. The heart and soul of the masters' work is splendidly revealed in Michael Sull's calm, easy style.

I cherish our rich heritage of American penmanship, and I would hope that the spirit of America's master penmen continues to live for the next several generations. Mr. Sull's work certainly stands as an accessible and readable account of this heritage that I will keep on my own reference shelf.

Darrell J. Moon  
Past President,  
The A. N. Palmer Company  
Schaumburg, Illinois  
October, 1989



Study as much as you practice.

Know what you want to execute.

Use only the best materials.

Keep your pens very clean.

Watch your slant carefully.

Master one style at a time.

Sit up; don't slouch, and  
breathe regularly.

L. Nadaritz.



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# CONTENTS

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## INTRODUCTION

The study of the human effort to communicate through the written word provides a fascinating journey for the student of letter forms. Within the last dozen years or so, this field of the lettering arts has attracted an ever-increasing number of devotees—from craftsmen to hobbyists in countries throughout the world. The scribes of our generation, while respectful of the talents exhibited by lettering artists of the past, are putting forth remarkable energies to further develop their abilities in experimental directions. New horizons are constantly being set as hand lettering, often in conjunction with laser and computer technology, challenges existing standards in design, color, spontaneity, and purpose. The calligrapher, lettering artist, and typographer are finding themselves in a most exciting era of their profession, and to these people, communicators of the written word owe much. Yet, while mindful of this renaissance, it remains true that we share an obligation to remember the past. It is in this idea that the intent of this volume lies.

The decorative penmanship styles of nineteenth century America were unique in the gracefulness of their forms and in their speed of execution. The purpose such ornate writing served—commercially as well as esthetically—was unprecedented in its day, and the skills of its master penmen have never been equalled since. Economic and historic factors gave birth to the need for such writing, and the human spirit—that intangible quality of energy and purpose—raised the craft to the heights of artistic endeavor. However, it is sad to observe that amid today's strong resurgence in hand lettering, comprehensive texts on such ornamental penmanship only surface occasionally in antique bookstores. The last book on the subject to be published premiered nearly a half century ago, and has remained out of print for many years. It is this void I now address. The peculiarities of these styles—the forms themselves, the tools of the art, and the techniques of execution—are our subjects herein to explore, learn, and enjoy. The graceful flow of line and shade, the elegance of flourished handwriting, the visual qualities of such ornamental penmanship—all of which were daily fare to several generations of an industrious people—are once again brought to light.

It is the author's hope that this work will afford to all interested persons the opportunity to re-discover American script writing of the past, and further acquaint the reader with the rich heritage that is its legacy. To this goal, I wish you an enjoyable journey.



From the onset, my intent for this project has always been of a very personal nature. More than attempting to produce a text with simply better models than other works currently in print, it was my goal to share with the reader the *human aspect* of America's Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship, as well as some of the personal techniques that made these styles so unique in appearance. To present the subject in perspective; to orient the text in such a manner that the reader might feel as though I am working *with* them; that we are going through the book *together*—these objectives have been important to me. As you scan the contents between these covers, I would wish this aspect comes through.

I have always been fascinated by history. Yet, too often, it seems to me that schools tend to reveal history as solely a collection of events relating to dates, names and places through time. How sad I always felt it was for students to simply memorize such dates and names in order to pass a history test, for what, then, have these young people really learned? Instead, it is my belief that if we try to view history as a continuum of time—as series of events and stories of the people and their lives that were involved in making such events happen, *then*, by trying to understand these people, we may be able to understand and appreciate history. Such is also true of historical styles in literature, music and art—including Ornamental Penmanship.

In 1980 I had the good fortune of making the acquaintance of a Mr. Paul H. O'Hara, a gentleman who, quite simply, was of another time. Ninety-one years of age and full of energy, he truly was a very special man indeed. I was introduced to him by David P. Fairbanks, a superb engrossing artist who had been my mentor for several years at that point. An influential part of David's training had been from the *Zanerian Manual of Engrossing* back in the 1940s and 50s, and from him I had gained an appreciation of the various Zanerian publications. While in the Fairbanks studio, I would frequently take time to pour over the old books, especially *Lessons In Ornamental Penmanship*, C.C. Canan's *Gems of Penmanship*, *Fascinating Pen Flourishing*, and *The Secret of the Skill of Madarasz*. As I had been involved with broad-pen calligraphy for a few years previous, I was struck with wonder at this totally different variety of calligraphy. This *ornamental penmanship*, as it was called, was nothing like the works I had seen by the broad-pen legends such as Edward Johnston, Irene Wellington and others. It wasn't even like the flourished Copperplate script I had seen in George Bickham's *The Universal Penman*. In short, I was held in fascination, and by scouring the pages, I started to familiarize myself with the names of the master penmen thereby associated. So, it was thus a combination of astonishment, disbelief and awe that I felt upon meeting Paul, for he was one of those master penmen.

I became Paul's last student and in our time together he shared the camaraderie with me that he experienced with so many of the master penmen of 50 to 70 years before. He frequently recalled the pranks they pulled while attending the Zanerian, their lessons in Ornamental Penmanship, Business Writing and Engrossing, and their sorrow upon the deaths of men such as Madarasz, Zaner and Bloser. And, he often spoke of the tradition the master penmen had of leaving their students more than merely an acquired skill, but a legacy of people and penmanship as well.

This was the legacy Paul left me, and one for which I feel a responsibility.

Each of us owes something of ourselves to those individuals who preceded our lives; who *made* history because *they were part of history*. Just as we cannot separate ourselves from who we are or what we are, to ignore our past is to forget our heritage. We truly do have a rich legacy that has been left for us, and what we do with it is for us to decide. So it is that I wrote this book and now leave it with you. It is my earnest wish that it is worth your attention and interest, and I sincerely welcome you to the Spencerian saga.

Michael R. Sull  
Prairie Village, Kansas  
October, 1989





### Origin of Spencerian Writing

Evolved mid nature's unpruned scenes,  
On Erie's wild and woody shore,  
The rolling wave, the dancing stream,  
The wild rose haunts—in days of yore.

The opal, quartz, and ammonite,  
Gleaming beneath the wavelet's flow,  
Each gave its lesson—how to write—  
In the loved years of long ago.

I seized the forms I loved so well—  
Compounded them as meaning signs,  
And to the music of the swell,  
Blent them with undulating vines.

Thanks, nature, for the impress pure!  
Those tracings in the sand are gone;  
But while the love of thee endures,  
Their grace and ease shall still live on.



*Painting of Lake Erie shoreline, courtesy Valparaiso University Museum of Art.*



That can be more noble  
Than to wield the mighty pen  
That cultivates artistic taste  
And records the thoughts of men.<sup>6</sup>

# 1

## PENMANSHIP IN A NEW LAND

American Writing Manuals •  
The Steel Pen • The Spencerian  
System of Handwriting.



## Chapter 1

# PENMANSHIP IN A NEW LAND

"Common schools" were the first institutions of education to appear in the new settlements of colonized America. Much of what was taught to this new nation reflected the English system of education's emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics. Thus, from the start, the teaching of handwriting was part of our literacy training.

### AMERICAN WRITING MANUALS

Naturally, the early American handwriting manuals were derived from their English models. The first work on the subject in this country was perhaps *The Art of Writing*, by John Jenkins, printed in Boston, Massachusetts in 1791. This was soon followed by a great number of similar publications, as well as the establishment of schools for the teaching of penmanship. Henry Dean, one of the first American writing masters, conducted such a writing school in Salem, Massachusetts. As many others had done, he put his lessons into book form, *Dean's Analytical Guide to the Art of Penmanship*, published in 1795, copyrighted June 16, 1805, and republished in 1808. The first issue of *The New York Sun*, published on September 3, 1833, carried an advertisement for a "Writing Academy" conducted by G. Ely. James Gordon Bennett, founder of *The New York Herald*, established a commercial school in 1824 "for the instruction of young gentlemen intended for mercantile pursuits." Benjamin Foster was the winner of a contest for the superlative essay on the best method of teaching penmanship, conducted by the American Institute of Instruction in 1832, and later enlarged this work and published it as *Foster's System of Penmanship; or, the Art of Rapid Writing, Illustrated and Explained*. During this time, business schools which taught penmanship, in conjunction with other courses, began to appear. Nicholas Harris' "Hartford Commercial Academy" (1835) was quite possibly the first such business school in Connecticut. Similarly, Thomas Jones was conducting a commercial academy with an emphasis on penmanship in New York in 1841.

By now, numerous centers for learning penmanship and a variety of instruction manuals were available to the public. As an example of the steady publishing trend and popularity of penmanship during the nineteenth century, the following is only a partial listing of early writing manuals:

*The Elements of Analytical and Ornamental Penmanship*, by C.W. Bazeley, published 1822, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

*Practical Penmanship*, by Benjamin Franklin Foster, published 1830, Albany, New York. This was a study of the Joseph Carstairs System of Penmanship in England, as Foster was himself a student of the Carstairian System. Note that this was written prior to the 1832 work mentioned previously.

*Adam William Rapp's Scientific Penmanship*, by A.W. Rapp, 1845.

*Rightmyer's Penman's Paradise*, published by Knapp and Rightmyer, New York, 1852.

*Becker's Ornamental Penmanship*, by George J. Becker, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1856.

Simultaneous with the increased popularity of penmanship in America was the commercial production of steel pens, which, essentially, were to shape the direction of ornamental penmanship.

### THE STEEL PEN

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the steel pen had become the standard tool for writing. Prior to the late 1700s, the quill pen was the common instrument used. Though capable of rendering fine lines, quills required a lot of preparation and maintenance. By contrast, the steel pen promised to be less troublesome for the novice writer. However, the first steel pens, made as early as 1748 at Aix-la-Chapelle in France, had little flexibility. To overcome this problem, the earliest American steel pen manufacturer, Peregrine Williamson, of Baltimore, devised the two side slits in the pen in the early 1800s. Until 1822, the manufacturing of steel pens was still mostly handwork; hence, they were very expensive, lacked uniformity, and could be produced only in comparatively small quantities. But in that year, Joseph Gillott, of Birmingham, England, who had been a Sheffield steel worker, invented the steel pen press, which stamped out pens in greater quantities with precision and com-



Englishman Joseph Gillott's invention of the steel pen press (1822) was a significant contribution to the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship. The versatility of the durable steel pen point permitted a greater range of creative expression to the writing masters than was possible with the quill pens previously used.

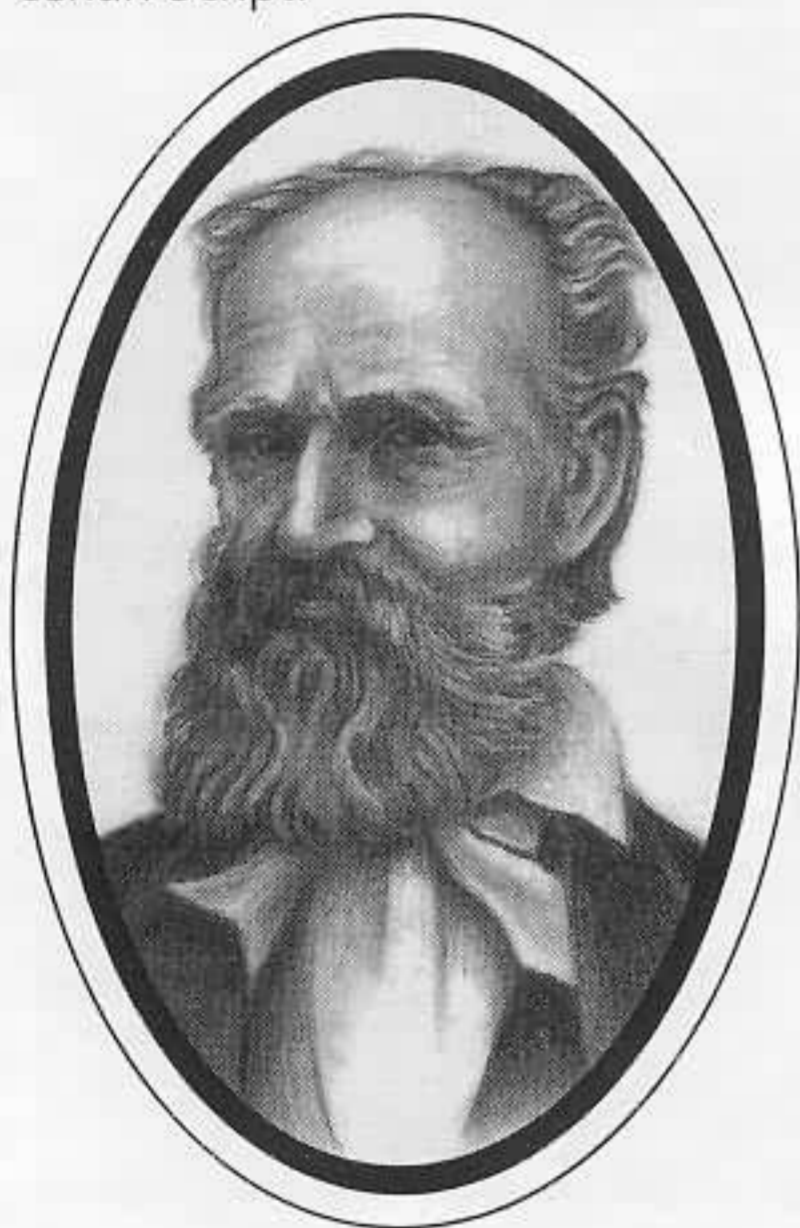
— FIGURE 1 —



paratively little cost. Gilliott later adapted his press to various other operations: cutting, slitting, bending and shaping. He introduced improvements in the process of hardening and tempering, and finally produced a steel pen of superior quality. Thus, at a time when penmanship schools and writing manuals were becoming more plentiful, the new steel pen was now commercially available. Undoubtedly, this achievement in perfecting the steel pen not only encouraged more people to take up the art, but contributed significantly to the extraordinary range of skills ultimately reached by the master penmen.

## THE SPENCERIAN SYSTEM OF HANDWRITING

Although there were a number of writing schools and penmanship books by 1830, no single method had established itself as the popularly accepted standard for learning penmanship. It is here that we begin the story of Platt Rogers Spencer, who, more than any one person, came to influence the teaching of decorative handwriting during the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship, an era which lasted from approximately 1850 to 1925. This was the most glorified period of ornamental writing in American history, and the most important style of that time became known as Spencerian Script.



— FIGURE 2 —

Platt Rogers Spencer was born November 7, 1800 in Fishkill, New York, a small town in the southeastern corner of the state near Poughkeepsie.\* As a young boy, he displayed a strong interest in penmanship and constantly tried to improve his own handwriting, endeavoring to base the shapes of his letters on the elliptical curves he saw in forms of nature. From the age of 10, Spencer lived in several small towns on the southern shore of Lake Erie in Northeastern Ohio, and eventually settled in Geneva. The shape of the water-worn pebbles and gently undulating motions of the waves became his models for curvature in letters. He practiced with determined energy to perfect an alphabet that would reflect such gracefulness and yet be fairly easy to exe-

*Platt Rogers Spencer (1800–1864); Originator of the Spencerian System of Penmanship. In addition to his stature as the Father of American Penmanship, Spencer was a pioneer of business education. With his sons and several students, he was instrumental in the development of America's first business colleges, the purpose of which he referred to as "education for real life."*

cute. So successful was he in doing so, that at age 12 he was asked by his teacher to instruct fellow students. Spencer's skill in penmanship eventually became known throughout Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York as he travelled and taught at their various common schools. He formalized his own system of penmanship and opened up a school to instruct anyone who desired to learn. The Spencerian System of Penmanship boasted several advantages over other forms previously taught: it was easier to learn than the tedious, rounded English handwriting models of the day, and could be executed more rapidly. There was a rhythm to the movements used in practicing strokes, and because a combination of arm, wrist and finger muscles was utilized while writing his styles, there was less tendency for the fingers to cramp and feel stiff after long periods of practice. Such discomfort was common with the previous handwriting styles, which used primarily finger muscles.

By the early 1860s, Spencer had written several books on penmanship, and his system of handwriting became the standard used throughout the United States. After his death in 1864, his sons continued their father's work, promoting the Spencerian methods not only in elementary school classrooms, but in business schools and colleges throughout the country.

Many of Spencer's students became respected penmen in their own right, establishing institutions of commercial learning and, similarly, publishing handwriting manuals and copybooks. As penmen strove to further develop their skills, the Spencerian System evolved into a variety of script forms. These penmen taught yet another generation of penmen, but this evolution of the Spencerian System into a highly skilled ornamental art only served to strengthen the genre of decorative handwriting in America.

Most of the elaborate styles were not commercially used, but virtually every penman in business prior to the widespread use of the typewriter in the early 20th century, practiced and perfected these styles. Some styles, however, were of a novel nature, and served only to satisfy the creative ingenuity of the penmen who originated them.



— FIGURE 3 —

*Austin Norman Palmer (1860–1927), founder of the Palmer System of Penmanship. Seeking to develop a style of penmanship that was more legible and easier to write than Spencerian, Palmer's method of writing promoted muscular, rather than whole-arm movement. In the first decade of the 20th century, the Palmer method succeeded Spencer's as America's most widely taught form of handwriting.*

Among the great legion of penmen who rose to the heights of the profession between the Civil War and World War I were several who distinguished themselves by their

\*For a more complete history of Spencer, the master penmen, and the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship, please refer to Chapter 8.



skills. Of this elite group of penmen, perhaps Austin Norman Palmer (See figure 3) is the best known. Palmer received his early training from one of Spencer's most successful students, George Gaskell. In the 1880s, responding to the increasing need for penmanship in the commercial world, Palmer designed a variation of Spencer's script lettering which eliminated the time-consuming shades and flourishes that had been the hallmark of a penman's virtuosity. Instead, the lettering was pared down to its essential skeletal forms, which afforded rapid execution, and, hence, additional profit for the penmen who were paid for their rate of production. Confident of the "Palmer Penmanship" method's appeal, he promoted his system of writing by means of copybooks and a magazine he published, and by personally instructing teachers in many states. By the turn of the century, Palmer Penmanship had become accepted throughout the nation's public school systems, and had succeeded Spencerian as the approved method of handwriting instruction in America.

During the latter part of the 19th century, when ornamental handwriting was still practiced and taught in most of the business schools, penmanship as a whole experienced a rise in popularity. One of the many institutions which gained a reputation as the country's finest writing school was founded in 1888 by Charles Paxton Zaner, Elmer Ward Bloser and Lloyd Kelchner. The Zanerian Art College's faculty boasted some of the finest Master Penmen, and they produced great numbers of highly skilled individuals in this art. Many of these students became the next—and last—generation of master penmen.

In 1873, the typewriter was introduced to the commercial world, and by World War I, the demand for ornamental penmanship and calligraphy diminished in the wake of the Industrial Revolution. Prior to its decline, a great variety of styles had evolved from America's fascination with the pen. These styles were often as individual in nature as the penmen who created them.

FIGURE 4 —

Left to right:  
E. W. Bloser,  
C. P. Zaner,  
L. M. Kelchner  
*Business Educator*, 1929



*Zanerian College*



Home of the Zanerian College, 118 North High Street, Columbus, Ohio. The college is located in the Sessions Block, S. E. Corner High and Long Streets, just four squares south of the Union Station, in the central part of the beautiful Capital City of Ohio.

### Business or Shorthand Course in Connection with Penmanship Course

Close by the Zanerian College are schools that make a specialty of teaching the commercial branches. By special arrangements with these institutions, we are enabled to offer a complete business or shorthand course in any one of these schools in connection with our course in penmanship at no extra charge for tuition.

A large number of young men and women wish to take our course in penmanship, and also wish to take a business or shorthand course, but feel that they cannot afford to attend a business school and then attend our school in order to do so. This arrangement of ours gives to such persons the opportunity of taking both courses at practically the expense of one.

Pupils who follow this plan spend forenoons at the penmanship work and afternoons at the other work. Both courses can be taken at the same time very advantageously, since much in both the business and shorthand courses depends on the ability of the student to handle the pen (or the pencil) surely and quickly, and both courses can be completed in this way in much less time than they could if one were completed before beginning the other.

Then, the opportunity of receiving the best instruction in penmanship, in connection with first-class instruction in either the business course or the course in shorthand and type-writing, is an advantage no other institution is able to offer.

Many persons take both courses in this way, and it is needless to say they are not long in securing good positions after completing the work. Such persons are in great demand. It usually requires from seven to fifteen months to complete both courses, but many take positions before completing the work.

#### Tuition for Penmanship and the Business Course, or for Penmanship and the Shorthand Course.

Four weeks, \$15.00 ;    Eight weeks, \$27.50 ;    Twelve weeks, \$36.00 ;  
Twenty-four weeks, \$65.00.

Stationery for the business course costs about \$5.00 for three months, and for the shorthand course about \$2.50 for three months. We can allow no discount to ladies, or to students when more than one enter at the same time, to those taking either the bookkeeping or shorthand course in connection with the penmanship course.

Zanerian College, promotional brochure, 1910.

— FIGURE 5 —



# THE CURRICULUM

## The Business Penmanship Course

Prepares persons as good, rapid business penmen for business purposes, and it also prepares persons as professionals, enabling them to teach the art to others. This course also prepares persons as Special Teachers and Supervisors of Writing in the Public Schools.

The pupil is taught according to his needs. Those preparing to teach are taught to write model business styles, suitable for copies. They are also taught blackboard work, the best methods of teaching penmanship, handling large classes, etc. Those desiring to master penmanship for business purposes only, are taught the most rapid and practical styles possible. Mr. Zaner gives individual instruction and, as is well known, he is one of the best business writers to be found.

The time to complete this course varies from one to six months, depending upon the pupil's preparation, and upon his aptitude in learning, and his application to study and practice.

## The Ornamental Penmanship Course

Prepares persons as expert, professional penmen, card writers, policy engrossers, teachers, etc.

The usual time to complete this course varies as in the business penmanship course, but if taken after the business course has been completed, it takes but about two-thirds as long as the business. If taken in connection with the business, the time to complete the two varies from two to ten months, the average time being about six months.

## The Professional Penmanship Course

Comprises Business and Ornamental Penmanship and Methods, and such other styles as may be desired by the pupil. In other words, it includes the above two courses.

## The Professional Engrossing Course

Comprises Roundhand, Flourishing, Lettering and Pen Drawing, and prepares persons as professional engrossers of resolutions, diplomas, certificates, policy writers for insurance offices, artists for engraving establishments, etc.

The usual time to complete this course varies with the individual, depending upon natural aptitude, previous preparation, application, etc., and ranges from two to ten months, the average time being about six months. This course may be taken independent of the penmanship course, but is usually taken in conjunction with it.

## The Complete Professional Course

Comprises the Professional Penmanship and Engrossing Courses as described above. It is designed to prepare persons as professional penmen, engrossers and teachers. The time to complete it depends upon the natural and acquired ability of the pupil, aptitude, application, etc., and it therefore varies from three to fifteen months, the average time being about ten months.

Methods of Teaching may be taken in connection with any of the courses, or omitted. This work comprises lessons and lectures from the blackboard, recitations from "The Zaner Method of Arm Movement Writing," and essays or theses to determine the pupil's general education and technical knowledge of the subject.

The payment of tuition does not obligate the proprietors to grant diplomas or guarantee employment; these are given gratuitously when earned morally, mentally and skillfully.

Certificates made by the pupil in business, ornamental, or roundhand penmanship, text lettering, and engrossing are signed and sealed by the Principal when a grade of ninety per cent or more is attained.

Diplomas are granted when the pupil attains a grade of ninety per cent or higher in penmanship (business and ornamental), flourishing, lettering, engrossing and methods. Ninety-five per cent is required when engrossing or methods are omitted, and a grade of one hundred per cent is required when but business, ornamental, or engrossing are pursued.

Eligibility for graduation is determined by a pupil's department, grades, time and attention given to methods, essay and such other examination as may be deemed necessary by the Principal.

Our standards are high, but when a student secures a Zanerian diploma it means something and is worth something to the one possessing it.

Zanerian College, promotional brochure, 1910.

— FIGURE 6 —

**EXPLANATION.**

A—Muscular rest of the forearm, near the elbow.  
 B—Rest of the hand, on the surface of the nails of the 3d and 4th fingers.  
 C—Wrist, three quarters to one inch from the table.  
 D—End of the thumb, opposite the first joint of the fore finger—drawn back so that one half the pen is in view.  
 E—Three quarters of an inch from the left corner of second finger nail to the point of the pen at I.  
 F—Pen crosses the forefinger just forward of the knuckle joint.  
 G—Hand well inclined over to the left, that its upper surface may face the ceiling above, and the upper end of the pen point to the right shoulder.  
 H—The right edge of the hand—which should never touch the paper.  
 I—The pen, held with the nib square on the paper, so that pressure will produce the smallest possible mark—and grasped just tight enough to guide it, and no more.  
 K—End of the second finger dropped gently under the pen, which crosses it obliquely at the root of the nail.  
 To produce whole arm movement, raise the forearm some two inches and a half at A (see left drawing, Card 1), and slide on to the movable rest at B.

**KEY AND DIRECTIONS**

**FOR BOOK 13, SPENCERIAN, OR SEMI-ANGULAR PENMANSHIP.**

**Position for Writing.**

Position gives power to do; therefore study, and adopt in practice, the position of the hand and pen as in Card 1 and explanation.

Let the position of body and paper at the table or desk be such that the forearm will project naturally upon the paper at right angles therewith.

At a sloping desk the left side should always be inclined to it. In writing on a flat surface or table, good business writers select various positions, inclining thereto the left or right side, or sitting directly in front; but in either position avoiding much pressure on the right forearm, lest they suppress muscular movement.

The easy writer of an uniform hand will throw out the feet to harmonize with the slope of letters, and sit or stand as erect as practicable, and yet see clearly the point where he is writing, in order to preserve vital action and health.

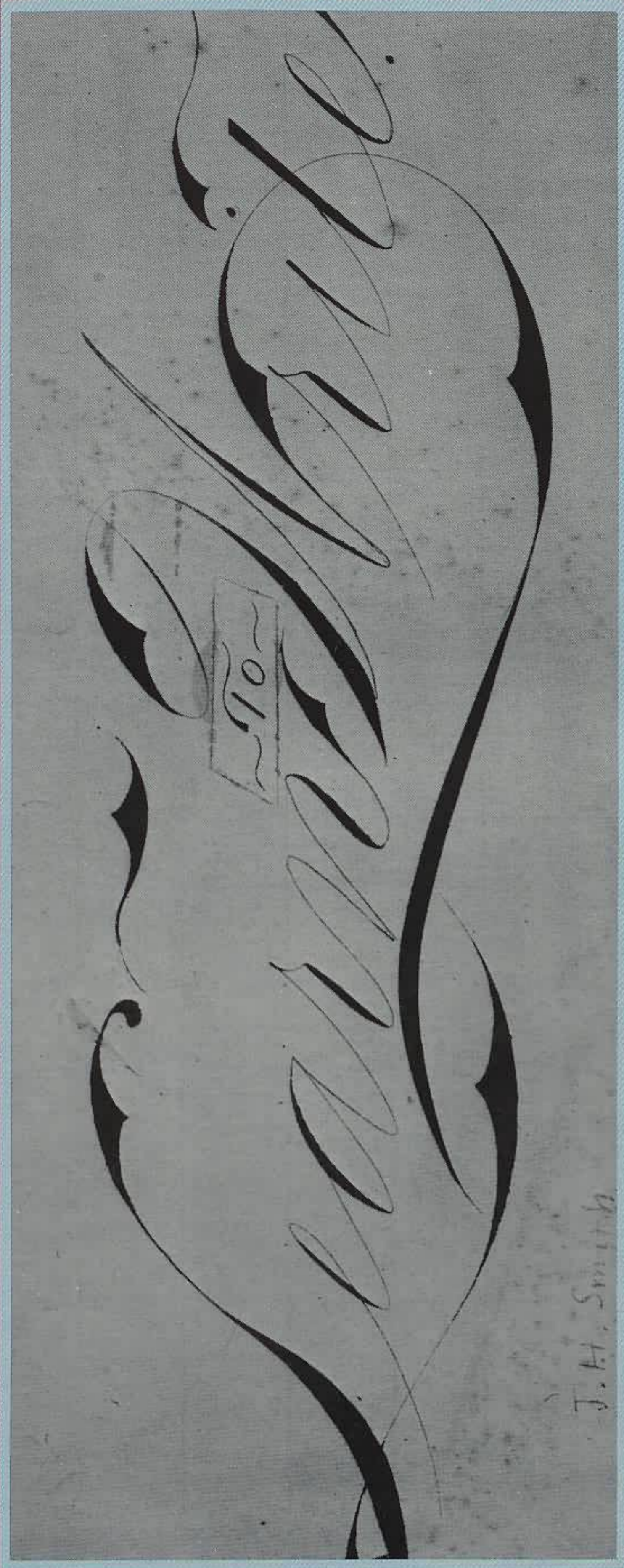
Spencerian Penmanship, Platt R. Spencer, 1857.

— FIGURE 7 —









## 2 STYLES OF PENMANSHIP

Spencerian Script • Artistic Penmanship • Signature Writing • Business Writing • Engrossers' Script • Novelty Scripts • Backhand Penmanship • Running Penmanship • Shaded-Base Penmanship • Needle Stitch Script • Courtney's Backslant Script • Figure Writing • Display Writing.



## Chapter 2

# STYLES OF PENMANSHIP

It can truthfully be said that a significant characteristic of the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship was the fervor with which people practiced handwriting. Although there was competition among penmen, an *esprit de corps* was shared as well; an intangible feeling of brotherhood bonded many of these men, one to another, in their craft. As the years went by and many developed their skills, a number of new styles were created. This enthusiastic energy exhibited by penmen at the turn of the century was paralleled by the active growth of business and industry in America. There were a number of professions which made great use of penmanship. As in all fields of endeavor, different styles of handwriting were developed to perform a variety of functions. Penmen soon tried to outdo each other, particularly in ornamental writing. This led to styles characterized by extremely elaborate flourishing, and in some instances, novel forms that, although interesting, were not of commercial value. Several penmen, particularly Francis B. Courtney, became famous due to their singular styles, while others became known for their ability to execute any style with considerable skill. Nevertheless, the degree of proficiency exhibited by these chirographers was remarkable.

Reviewing the styles most frequently used can help us to familiarize ourselves with the era, as well as gain an understanding of their uses. As you observe each style, note particularly the similarities and differences among them. Although some were more common than others, they each became an important thread in the fabric of Ornamental Penmanship.

### THE STYLES

#### SPENCERIAN SCRIPT

When the United States was founded in the eighteenth century, the form of penmanship most widely in use was the English Roundhand, or Copperplate, style of writing. Perhaps the best known examples of this can be seen in our Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights. Spencerian Script, as developed by Platt Rogers Spencer in the early nineteenth century, exhibited a marked contrast to these styles. While Copperplate was executed rather slowly, with dexterous finger movement, Spencer produced his writing with a free swinging whole-arm movement, using the fingers only to a limited extent with the lowercase letters. Additionally, the Spencerian letters characteristically display large, elliptical ovals in their forms, which gives the penmanship an open, airy grace in appearance. The use of shaded strokes is quite restricted in Spencerian, and is most prominently displayed in the capital letters, with one shaded stroke per letter being the rule. In the lowercase alphabet, shading is used infrequently, appearing normally in descenders and the ascender of the "d" and "t." However, there is no "hard-

and-fast" rule, here, and Spencer demonstrated this by occasionally altering the letters he shaded. This feature—variable shading—allowed the lettering to attain a 'personal' appearance, reflecting the personality of the penman. Such was the unique feature of Spencerian Script: it revealed personal preferences, while its underlying structure remained uniform. Though shading of the lowercase letters, for example, may have varied, *letter form* did not. Letter spacing was fairly wide, with one to one and one-half times the width of an average letter to be allotted between each letter. This wide spacing was the result of the speed of writing, and was practiced over and over again via the popular "cross-drill exercises" of the day. (See chapter 4)

Flourishing in true Spencerian Script is minimal, for this style was intended for common use. The simplicity of this style is shown in figure 8, which are samples of Platt Rogers Spencer's own handwriting. It was this "pure" Spencerian hand that was to serve as the basis for nearly all the varied and elaborate pen written scripts which were to follow.

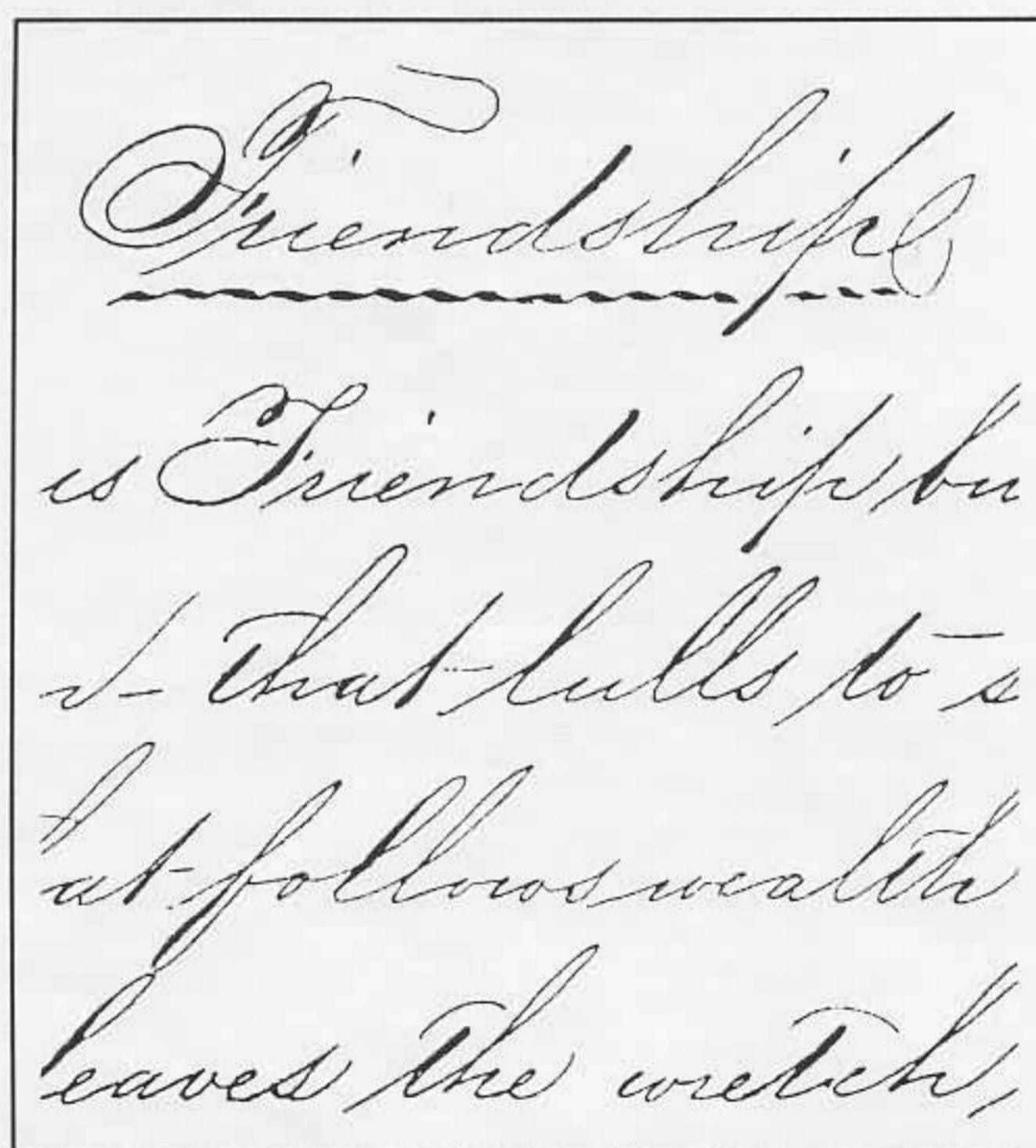


FIGURE 8—SPENCERIAN SCRIPT

#### ARTISTIC PENMANSHIP, ORNAMENTAL WRITING

An extension of Spencerian that evolved somewhat naturally from competition among penmen was Artistic Penmanship, or, as it was later known, Ornamental Penmanship. It is in this style that we find elaborate flourishes and swashes. To many of the era, Ornamental writing represented the epi-



tome of the penman's skill. In fact, during the Golden Age, penmen were often judged by how well they could write in this style. Artistic Penmanship was written very rapidly, with the arm completely off the table or desk top, with only the heel of the hand and little finger resting on the surface. When viewing the samples below and those in the plates, note carefully that, regardless of how ornate this style may be, correct Spencerian letters form the basis of the writing. When flourishing is overdone to the extent that the basic letterforms become distorted, the final result is unattractive. Therein lies the skill of the penman: to elaborate on the graceful lines and curves of Spencerian Script while maintaining the integrity of its letterforms.

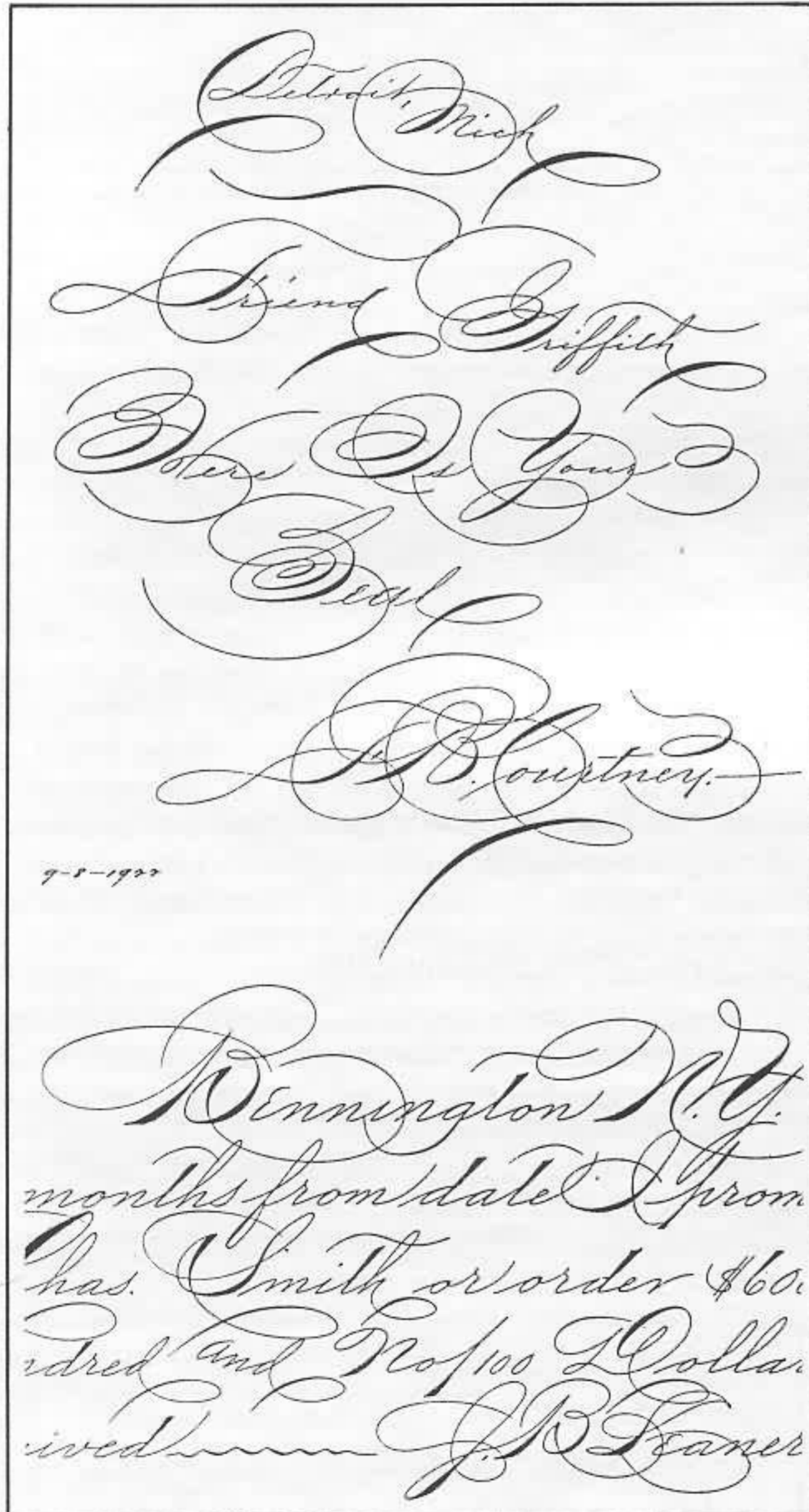


FIGURE 9—ORNAMENTAL PENMANSHIP

## SIGNATURE WRITING

Where Ornamental penmanship was referred to as the epitome of the penman's skill, Signature Writing, a form of Ornamental Penmanship, was, without question, the ultimate form of Ornamental Penmanship itself. It represented the pinnacle of the art. Virtually every penman of note from the era was proficient in this type of writing as well as Artistic

or Ornamental Penmanship. Each was known, in part, by his personal signature done in this method. In fact, elaborate autographs later became favorite subjects for other penmen to emulate. At one point, the Zaner-Bloser Company, owners of the Zanerian Art College, sponsored a contest to see who could write Louis Madarasz's signature combination in a fashion most like the great penman's.

The objective in Signature Writing, which was also known as "Superscription," was to join several "key" letters in a signature—these frequently being the capital letters and/or the last letter in the name—in such a fashion that the final appearance is one of a balanced design, in which letters combine gracefully. Looking at the samples below, it is difficult to imagine how some of the combinations were derived; yet, there were basic guidelines which governed the designing process. A detailed explanation of these rules with instructional information on Signature Writing will be found in Chapter 7.

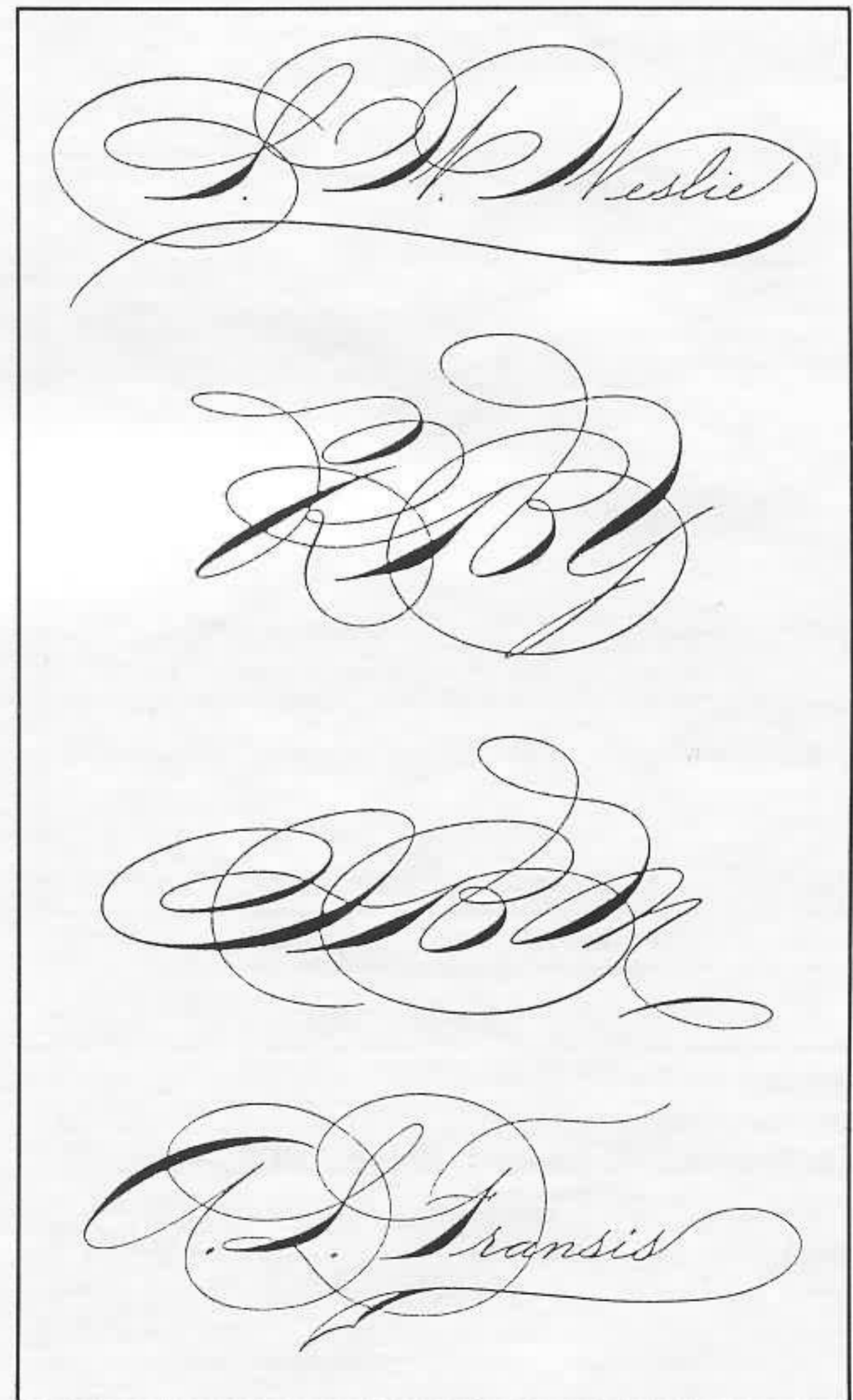


FIGURE 10—SIGNATURE WRITING

## BUSINESS WRITING

The antithesis of the very elaborate scripts, Business Writing served the need for a quickly written, legible form of writing that could be used in all commercial endeavors. It shows little variation in stress, or weight, with no flourishes of any kind, and with abbreviated descending and ascending loops,



such as in the letters b, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, p, q, y, and z. Because no shading was employed, it was not necessary to use an oblique pen staff for Business Writing.

It was even common for this style to be written with a fountain pen when Business Writing was used in commercial applications. The Palmer form of handwriting was actually a type of Business Writing.

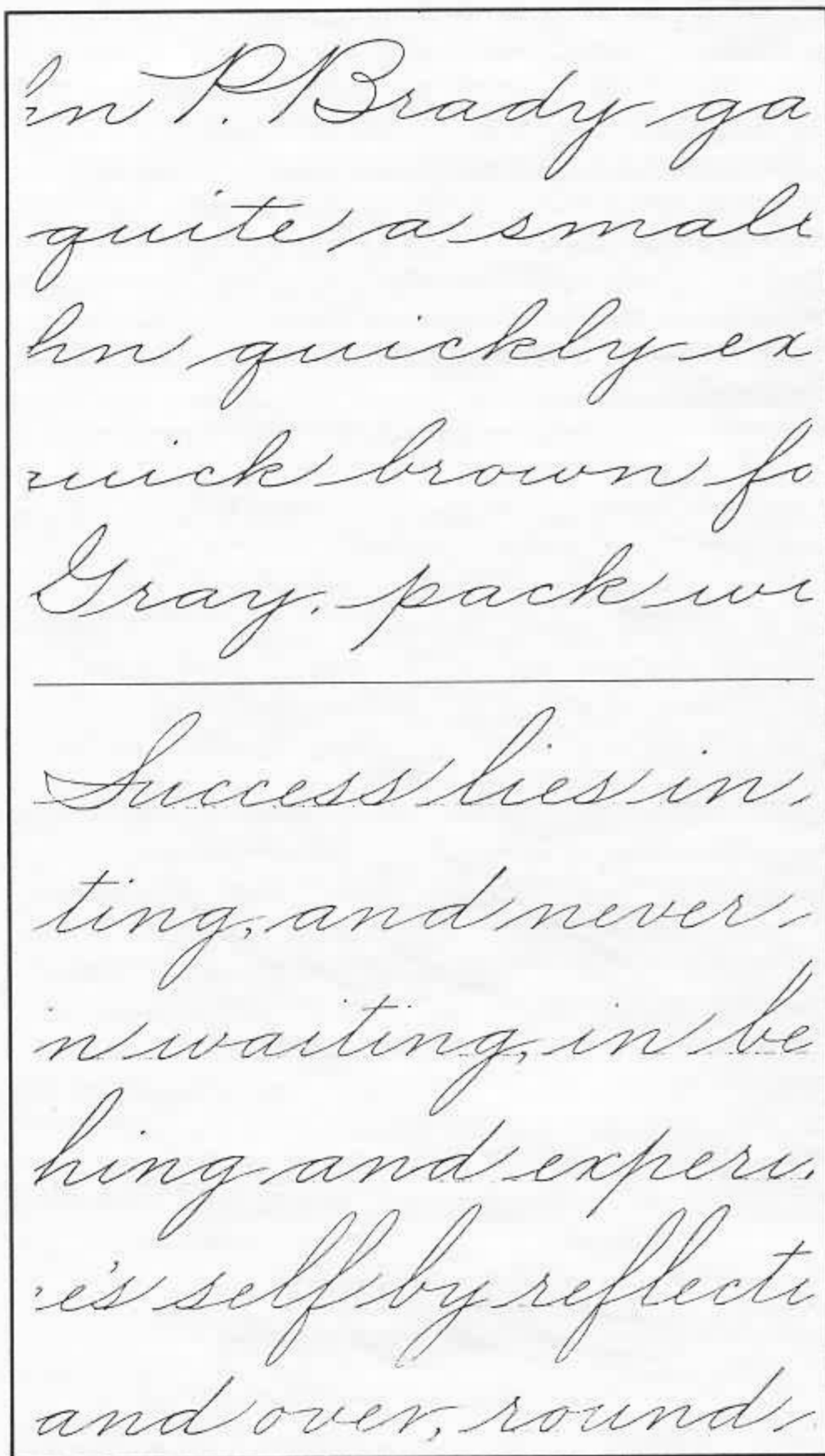


FIGURE 11—BUSINESS WRITING

### ENGROSSERS' SCRIPT, ENGRAVERS' SCRIPT

Similar to Copperplate in appearance, Engrossers' Script, also known as Engravers' Script, was, without question, the script style employed most frequently with Gothic text lettering for resolutions, proclamations, and testimonial scrolls. Unlike Copperplate, which has a continuous flow (letter-to-letter), including the joining ligatures, Engrossers' Script involves numerous pen lifts which purposely leave disconnected strokes within and between letters. In a sense, the letters are *constructed*, stroke by stroke, rather than freely penned with a continuous movement. Today, this beautiful form is used only by a handful of the few professional engrossers left in this country. In the early decades of the twentieth century, two engrossing artists whose skills in this style were of the highest degree were Charlton V. Howe of

Philadelphia and Willis A. Baird of Brooklyn, New York. Both men became legendary masters in this field.\*

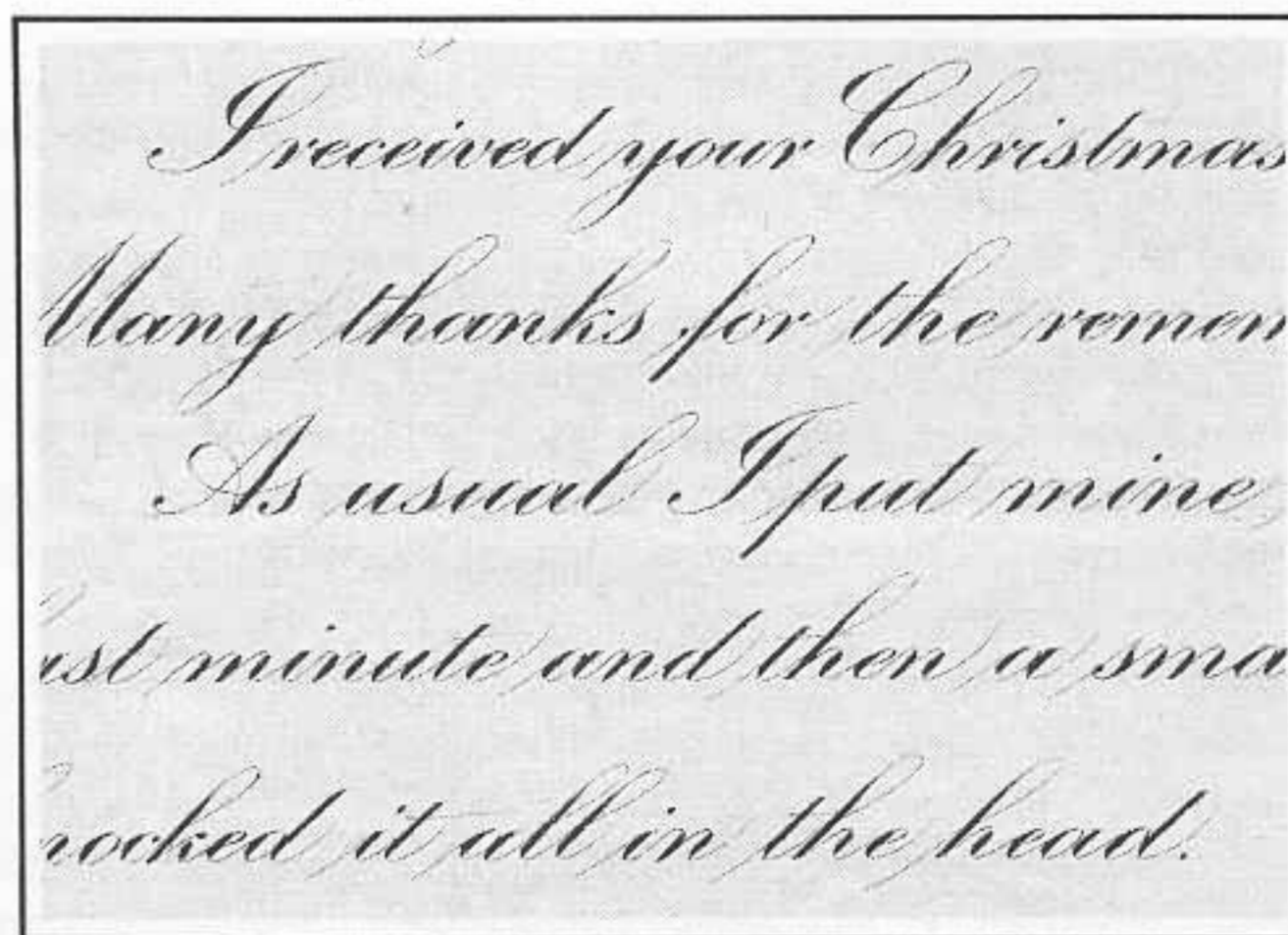


FIGURE 12—ENGROSSERS' SCRIPT

### NOVELTY SCRIPTS

The forms described thus far comprise the major script styles used most frequently during the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship. There were, however, several other scripts of a unique nature which also appeared in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such scripts were quite novel, and were utilized in brief word or sentence combinations, mainly to attract the attention of the reader. A few penmen developed their own exotic forms, and one of these individuals was so skilled in penmanship and in creating inimitable styles that he was dubbed "The Pen Wizard" by his peers. This interesting man was Francis B. Courtney, and biographical information about him will be found in Chapter 8.

The stylings which follow represent the novelty scripts of the era. For all practical purposes, they can be considered today as forgotten expressions of penmanship. What a loss!

### BACKHAND PENMANSHIP

Backhand Penmanship is, quite simply, a Spencerian script written at a reverse italic letter angle of approximately  $-5^{\circ}$  from the vertical. It is also characterized by smaller ovals in the capitals than is seen in the normal Spencerian, and little or no flourishing. This style did find some use in the text of resolutions and other engrossed works. Aside from such cases, however, its usage was restricted to occasional envelope addressing among penmen.

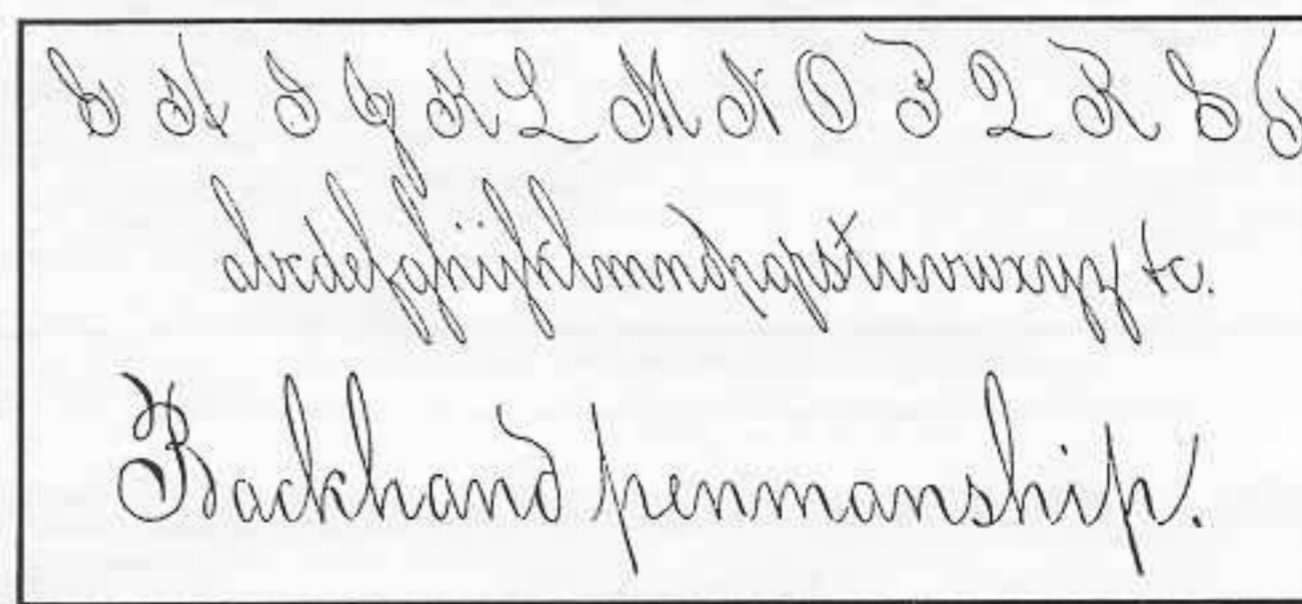


FIGURE 13—BACKHAND PENMANSHIP

\*(For detailed instructions on this style, the reader is recommended to consult the Zanerian Manual of Alphabets and Engrossing. See the Bibliography at the end of this book.)



## RUNNING PENMANSHIP, RUNNING HAND

Also a variety of Spencerian Script, Running Penmanship merely extends the width of the written word by increasing the letter spacing to approximately twice the normal width. Consequently, there is at least two or three letter's width between each letter in the word. Also, the height of the lowercase letters is one-half to two-thirds the normal height of the lowercase Spencerian forms.

Because of the broad length of words produced in this style, it did not lend itself very well to common usage. Thus, Running Penmanship was one of the least frequently used styles, mainly appearing in the correspondence of one penman to another, as they sent each other samples of their works.

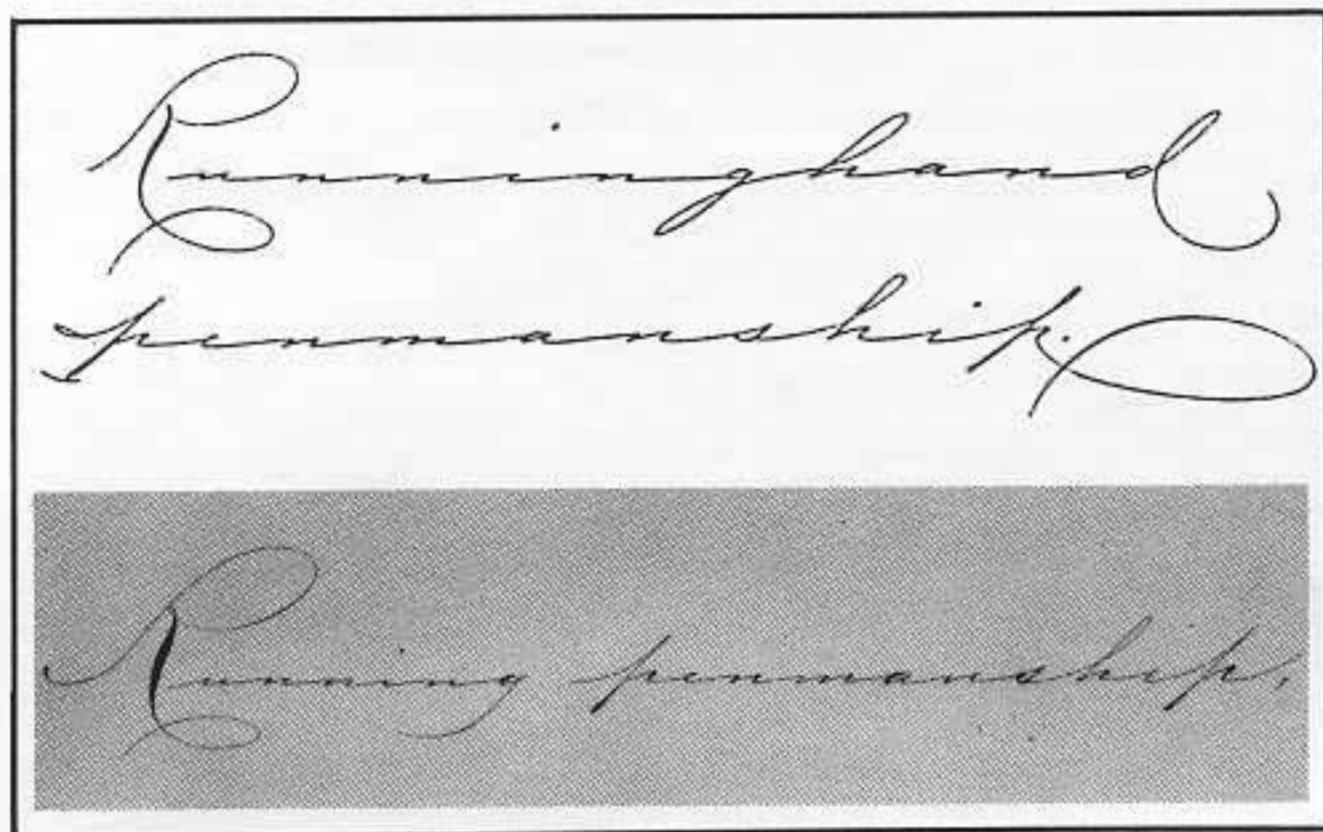


FIGURE 14—RUNNING HAND PENMANSHIP

## SHADED-BASE PENMANSHIP

One of the most novel styles of all was Shaded-Base Penmanship. For the most part, it was used in specimen writing. This was principally due to its illegibility, making it worthless for common use. Few specimens of this variety are found today. It was characterized by rounded letter forms with shades appearing only from the mid point of the letter's height down to the baseline. At times, it was written with a backslant. The writing was done first, and the weighted shades were filled in afterwards by retouching.

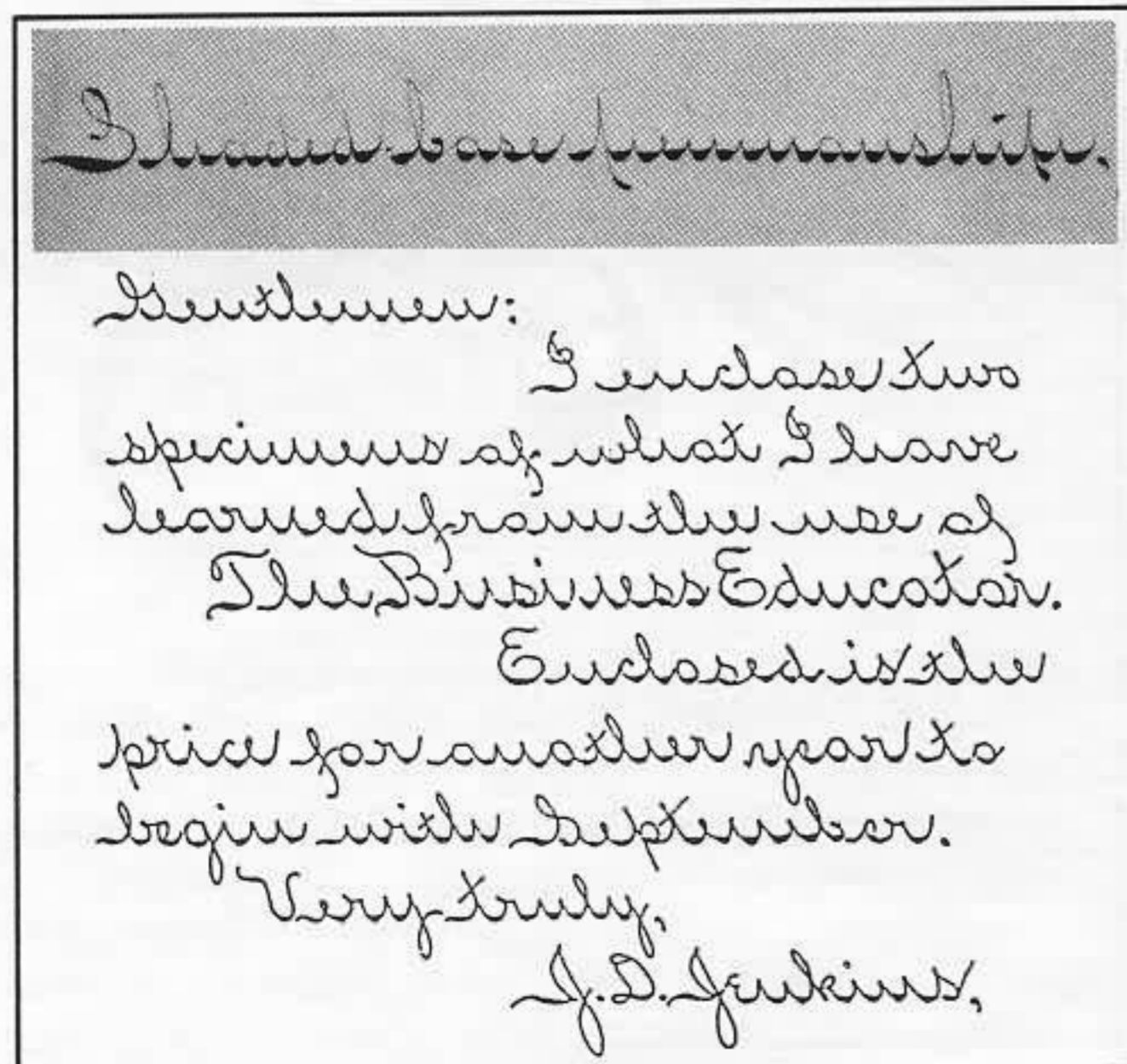


FIGURE 15—SHADED BASE PENMANSHIP

## NEEDLE STITCH SCRIPT

I owe a debt of thanks to Douglas Havach, a good friend and excellent calligrapher for Hallmark Cards, for bestowing the name "Needlestitch Script" to this style, since, as a distinctive form of novelty writing, it was never given a name during the period we have been discussing. A form of Spencerian in which short, interrupted dashes of shading are added to a primarily unweighted script, Needlestitch was used on a most infrequent basis, normally appearing in the samples penmen would write for their peers, and on addresses for correspondence. The great penman Francis B. Courtney seemed to enjoy employing the style in this way. The short shaded strokes appear to be placed primarily on the downstrokes, where shades would naturally occur. However, this rather unconventional style was truly a result of the penman's whim, and therefore shades did appear somewhat irregularly. Occasionally, a small gold dot was placed on the single shade located most near the midpoint of the lowercase letter height. This dot was placed in each letter of the word, giving a jewelled appearance to the entire word.



FIGURE 16—NEEDLE STITCH SCRIPT

## COURTNEY'S BACKSLANT SCRIPT

Here again we meet the Pen Wizard, Francis B. Courtney. His skills were nothing short of remarkable, and it was often said that he could write just as beautifully backward as he could forward. Several imaginative styles of writing and ornamentation were of his own creation. In more than a dozen old penmen's scrapbooks and over one hundred copies of various penmen's magazines from the Golden Age, few samples of singularly novel styles can be found by anyone other than himself. In terms of originality as well as in sheer skill of execution, Francis B. Courtney stood above his peers.

One particular form of writing for which he was known was his back slanted penmanship. It was quite different, however, from the style of the same name mentioned earlier, for this penman's work had a much more extreme back slant, and letters were quite condensed as well. Unique among all other styles, it became known simply as "Courtney's Script," and the penman used it primarily in display specimens for publication. The best method for reading this variety of script



is to turn the page clockwise and hold the paper at eye-level, allowing the eye to scan along the surface of the page; view the writing at the letter-angle until the letters become recognizable.

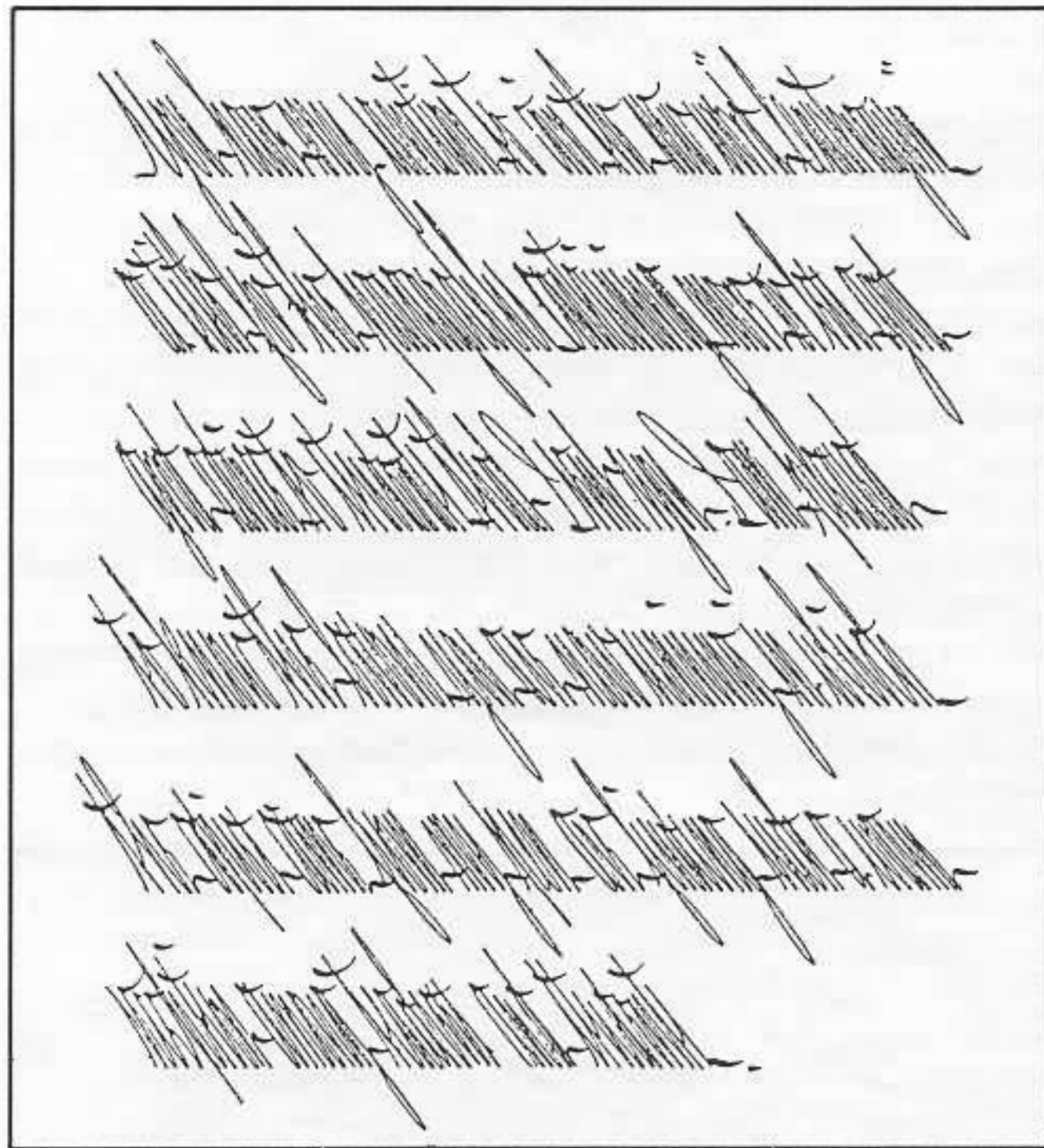


FIGURE 17—COURTNEY'S BACKSLANT SCRIPT

### FIGURE WRITING

Figure Writing appears to belong to that select group of novelty styles developed by Francis Courtney. It does indeed seem possible that this penman could fashion letter forms out of any mark on paper. In this variety, he does so using numbers. Observe the alphabet he penned in the figure below and the excerpt of writing. It becomes somewhat more legible when you squint your eyes. Figure Writing is included here because of its exotic nature and as a tribute to Courtney; few other penman ever attempted it, let alone the great penman's "Letter heads":

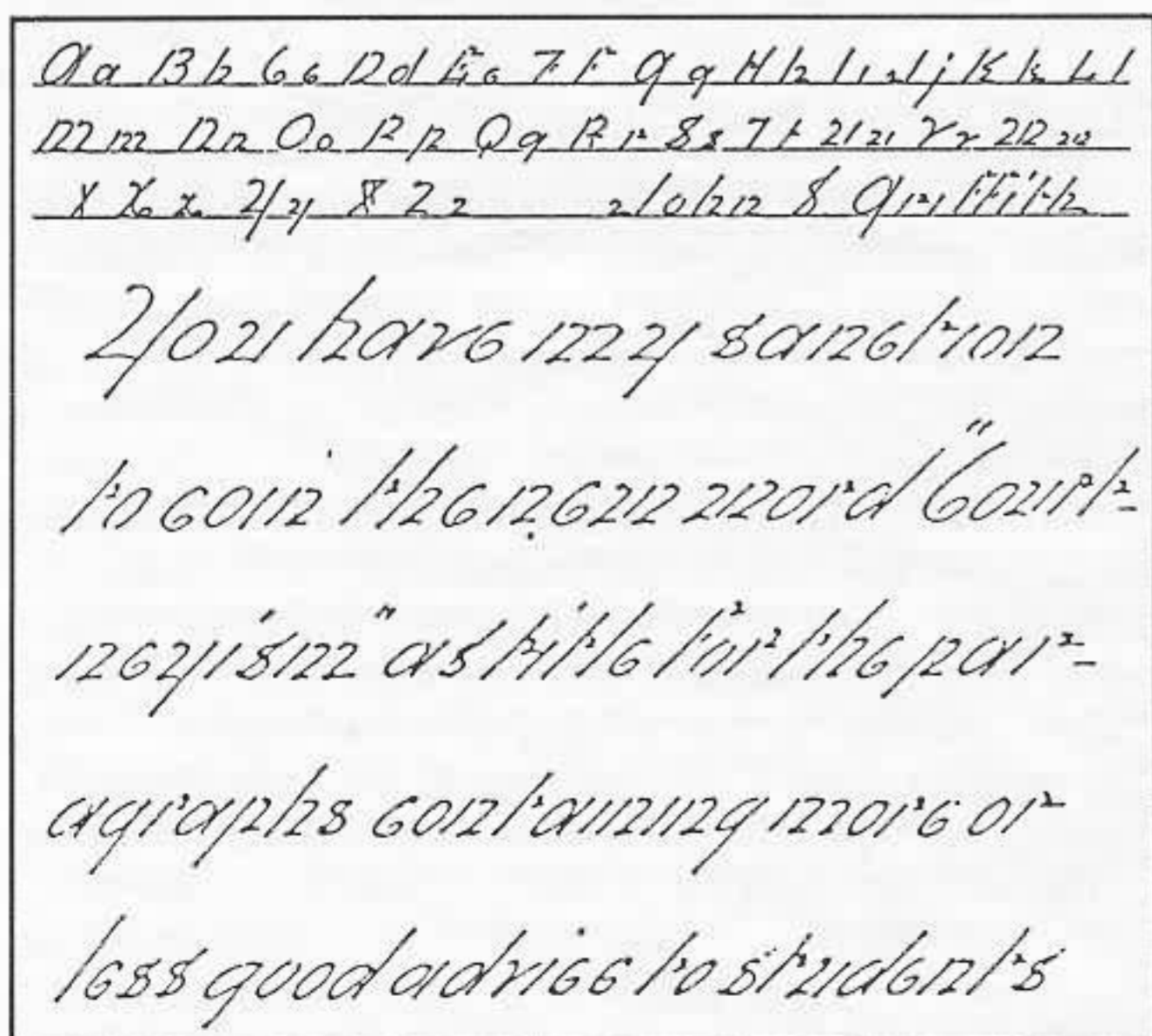


FIGURE 18—FIGURE WRITING

### CREATIVITY—DISPLAY WRITING

Just as there were scores of penmen, there were many personalized and unique styles of penmanship. We have mentioned the major novelty scripts of the day, but other varieties did exist. Interesting forms of ornamentation appeared, too, such as shadowed script, the background "wash of color" effect, again by Courtney; and also Courtney's bird and fish flourishes. The joining of every letter in a word by means of a circular flourishing stroke, not dissimilar to signature writing, was also most creative. Many of these individualistic styles were not connected scripts at all, but rather, disconnected letters with an unusual system of shades or stroke angles.

*By a careful study of the Letter Heads or Heads of Letters, you will be surprised to note that all the heads are produced from the characters used in the alphabet. The nose is formed from such letters as E, L, U, J, V, etc.; the mouth from F, T, H, L, M, etc.; the chin from U, E, C, L, F, T, etc.; the forehead from V, F, I, L, W, etc.; the hair from A, H, F, C, M, etc.; the mustache from V, and whiskers from V, W, H, etc. As you will note, many peculiar expressions are given in this manner.*



FIGURE 19—DISPLAY WRITING





*Francis B. Courtney*  
*Examiner of*  
*Questioned Documents.*

*Mr. Henry Cotton*  
*to Adelpheia Hotel Philadelphia*  
*Penna.*

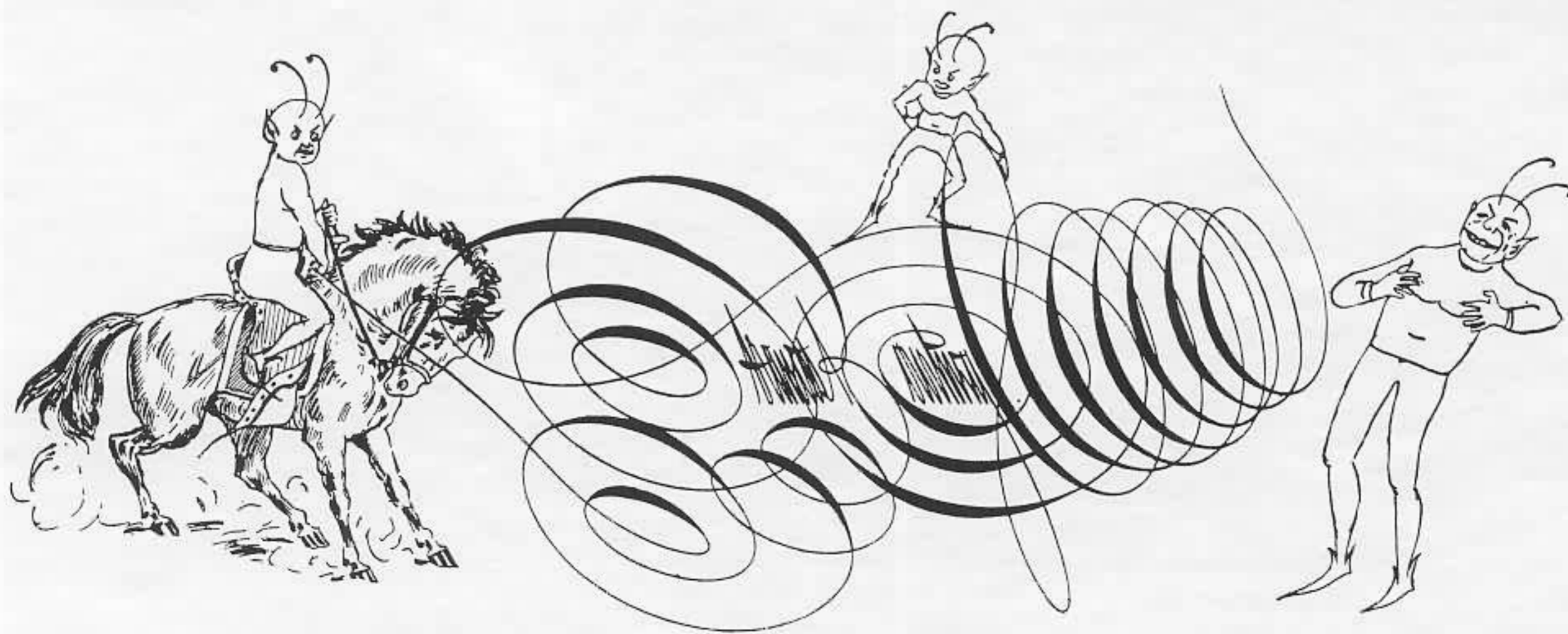


FIGURE 20—NOVELTY WRITING

All in all, this great variety of styles is evidence in itself of the wonderful skills possessed by the penmen of long ago. Today we can only marvel at their virtuosity and appreciate their works. Further information on these penmen and the era will be found in Chapter 8. For now, however, we will leave the historical period we have been discussing and turn our attention to the subject of instruction. It is well enough to read of the accomplishments of the past and thereby gain an insight into the heights of perfection that handwriting

can reach, but for those who seek to know how such writing is done, for those who wish to execute such styles *themselves*, and for those who can presently write a script style but wish to expand their skills, the following chapters are perhaps what the reader has been waiting for. Study them well, practice diligently; you will gain a rare skill that is rewarding in countless ways, and, even in today's age of computers, is limitlessly useful.



W.E.  
L. Lewis

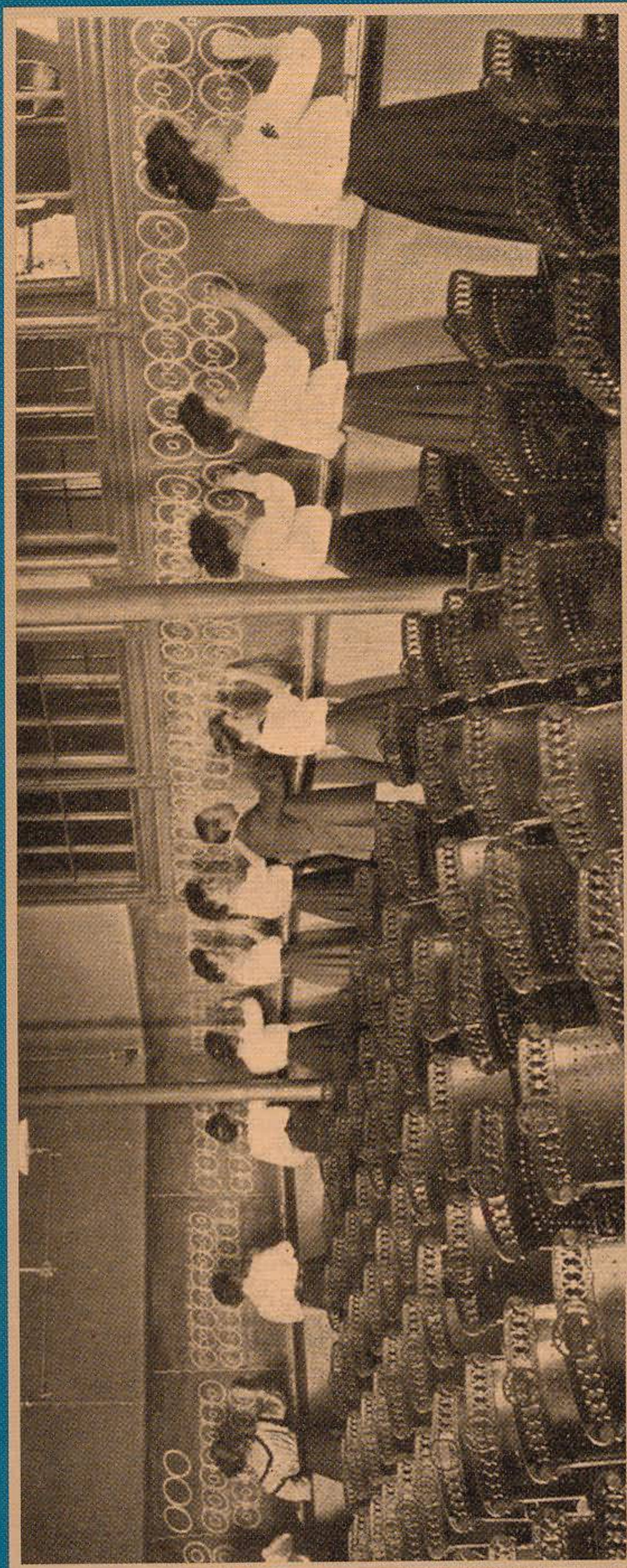
Squalls

Printshop

E. Morrow

FIGURE 21—DISPLAY WRITING





Penmanship class by E. C. Mills, Rochester, New York, circa 1908.

## 8 THE GOLDEN AGE OF ORNAMENTAL PENMANSHIP

Platt R. Spencer • Children of Platt R. and Persis Duty Spencer • The Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship • The Business of Penmanship • Austin Norman Palmer • Engrossing • The Penman's Hall of Fame • The End of an Era.





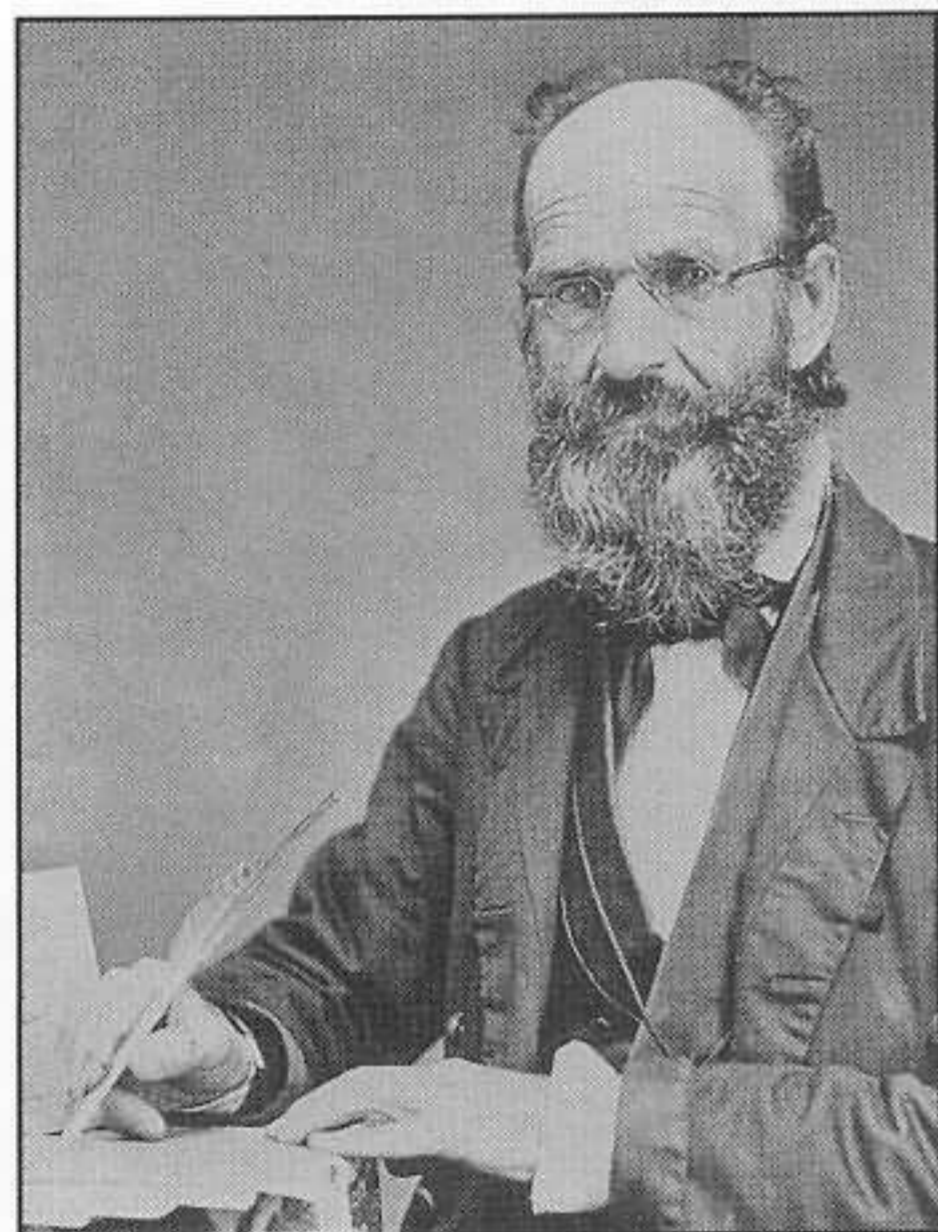
## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Thus far, considerable emphasis has been placed in this text on the many aspects of American Ornamental Penmanship, beginning with Spencerian Script. Aside from brief comments occurring within the preceding chapters, little attention has been paid to the life of Platt Rogers Spencer, the penmen who followed his example and those who extended the art, or other distinguishing aspects of their times. However, there is much to learn from history that can serve to help us better understand the products of an era. It is with this idea that the present chapter is offered to the reader. I encourage you to put your pens away for awhile and read . . .



## Chapter 8

# PLATT ROGERS SPENCER



**Platt R.  
Spencer**  
1800–1864

In many ways, Platt R. Spencer was a man whose fame can be attributed to the rare combination of qualities he possessed, and the particular timing of his life relative to American history. He was born on the 7th day of November, 1800, on a farm situated in the hills of East Fishkill, New York, near Poughkeepsie. His father, Caleb Spencer, was a native of Rhode Island and a soldier in the Revolutionary War, while his mother, Jerusha Covell Spencer, was originally from the town of Chatham on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. In their large family of eleven children, Platt was the youngest of his brothers and sisters. The Spencers spent the following ten years in New York State, moving from Fishkill in 1803 to a location near Wappinger's Falls in Hudson County. After Caleb Spencer's death in 1806, the family moved to the town of Windham in the Catskill mountain region of Greene County. In this rural setting, Platt was enamored by nature and found delight in the scenic hills, glens, and valleys of the countryside. Natural beauty captivated him, and the gentle curves of the ripples on a stream, waves on the river, vines in the meadow, clouds in the sky, and pebbles on the shore did not escape his sense of perception.

It was here in Windham, at the age of seven, that young Platt began to display a fondness for letters and penmanship. This was exhibited in his observations and criticisms of the handwriting of the public notices posted on the door of the school house. The rounded letters looked clumsy to Spencer, and before long, his energies were focused on attempts to write letters of beauty and grace. Thus, he endeavored to practice writing in smooth, continuous strokes on various materials such as tree bark, the ice and snow in winter, or scrap leather pieces he obtained from a local

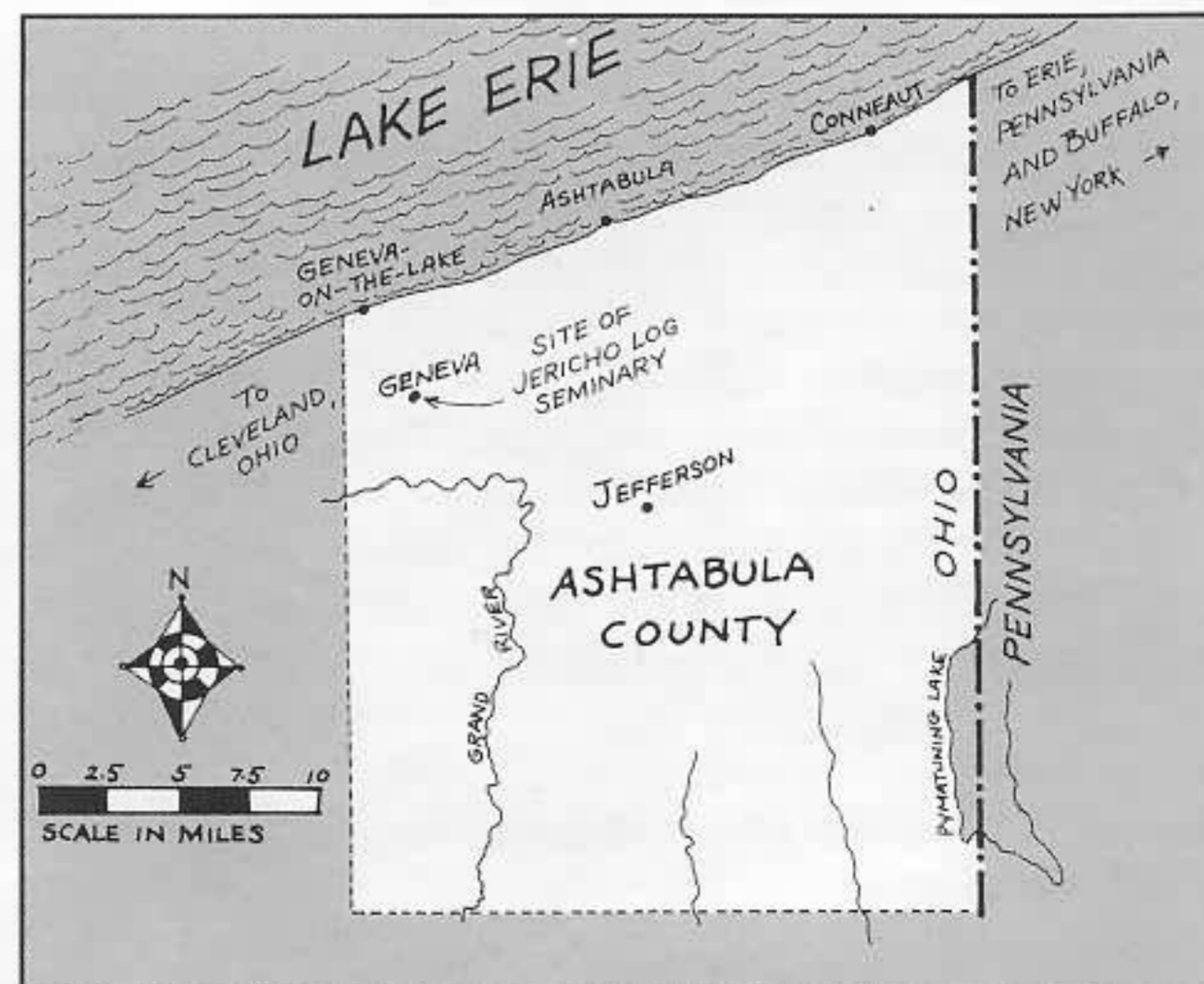
shoemaker. In a biography written after Spencer's death, his son, Lyman, recalled his father's testimony to his early "chirographic" training:

*It was his custom to practice writing in the sand, made smooth by the waves. The forms of ovals in the letters he moulded to stones polished and rounded by the action of the water of the lake . . .*

Paper was indeed a luxury in those days, and many years later, Platt often recalled how he obtained his first sheet of paper as a young lad, eight years of age. As he wrote in one of his early manuals:

*Up to February, 1808, I had never been the rich owner of a whole sheet of paper. At that time, becoming the fortunate proprietor of a cent, I dispatched a lumberman to Catskill, which, though twenty miles distant, was the nearest market, and instructed him to purchase the desired paper. He returned at midnight, and the bustle awakening me, I inquired eagerly the result of his mission. He had been successful, and brought the sheet to my bedside, rolled tightly and tied with a black linen thread. Having carried it the entire distance in his bosom, it was of course much wrinkled. I at once arose, and having smoothed it commenced operations. Before its arrival, my imagination had pictured to me what beautiful work I could do thereon. But the trial proved a failure. I could not produce a single letter to my mind; and after an hour's feverish effort, I returned to my bed disappointed, and to be haunted by feverish dreams.*

Spencer's first, and only, instructor of writing was Samuel Baldwin, the district schoolmaster. It was there, in the Windham school house, that Platt learned to use a goose quill in writing.



— FIGURE 52 —



With the loss of his father two years earlier, the care of the family was shared by his mother and eldest brothers. Following the advice of one of the older sons, Barzilla, Jerusha moved the family west to the new state of Ohio. Their journey lasted 51 days by wagon until they reached the town of Jefferson in Ashtabula County, Ohio on the 5th of December, 1810. No doubt, the move took a great deal of courage to complete, for only a decade before, northeastern Ohio had been the site of severe conflicts with the Indians.

After settling in Jefferson, the Spencer family dispersed, with the older siblings settling in the shore-towns of Kingsville, Ashtabula and Geneva. The geography and climate of the Western Reserve—as the area had been known—was harsh at the time of the Spencer's arrival. The land they now called "home" had yet to be cleared. There were few opportunities for employment or schooling, compared with the relative growth and commerce of New York State. Yet Platt proceeded to practice his writing with continued enthusiasm. Quoting from the History of Ashtabula County (1898):

*The shore of the noble lake near which he dwelt had a peculiar fascination for him. There he loved to spend his leisure hours, and its broad, beautiful beach from spring til autumn, and its expanse of ice in winter, he covered with endless chirographic tracings.*

*To a mind like his, keenly responsive to Nature's touch, such a school, even in such an art, could not be fruitless. The perfections of form and movement in the things about him—in wild flowers and trailing vines that adorned the bank, the rounded pebbles at his feet, the birds that soared or skimmed the surface of the lake, and, more than all, the restless, unwearied, rhythmic sweep of the waves—diffused through him their influence upon his work, and, as he practiced on, those forms and ideas grew that in after-years lent a charm both to his teachings and to the products of his pen.*

In 1812 we find Platt in Conneaut, Ohio, attending a school opened by Harvey Nettleton, who soon noticed his young pupil's skill at writing. After attending the school for only a short time, Spencer at age 12 was asked by Nettleton to instruct his fellow students in penmanship. He gladly obliged. Regarding his own studies, Platt exhibited a zest for learning. It is recorded that he literally partitioned himself off from the rest of the students to prevent any noise or pupil's mischief from distracting his concentration. As books were scarce, he made numerous journeys on foot to obtain the loan of various texts from which to learn. One such journey in particular was twenty miles long during which Spencer walked barefoot to secure a book on arithmetic. It is written that his only food on this trip was some raw turnips he found along the dirt road. On his return trip, he sought lodging at night in a settler's barn, for he was too bashful to apply at the nearby cabin for a bed.

Concerning his family, events of a sad nature occurred at this time, for two of his brothers gave their lives while serving in the War of 1812—one dying at Malden, Canada, in the army under General Harrison, and the other while a prisoner during the surrender of Detroit. Excerpts from Platt's diary recount his fear as a boy upon hearing the sound of gunfire echoing across the lake when the British were defeated in 1813.

Despite the family's loss, Spencer's zeal for learning penmanship remained undaunted and he soon became known

for his skill. His ability with goose quill pens earned him the task of supplying all the copy sheets for the instruction in penmanship at the Nettleton school. In recognition of this talent, Spencer was chosen to address the townspeople of Kingsville, Ohio in their Independence Day celebration of 1814. Considering Kingsville's stature as the educational center of Ohio, this was indeed quite an honor for the young man.

In 1815, Spencer instructed his first "commercial" writing class apart from Mr. Nettleton's school, although he remained in Kingsville during this period. It is said that he displayed great energy while teaching, and in his enthusiasm, forgot to collect his instructing fees from this first class! Other teaching assignments and positions were to follow, but Spencer was not to earn a living as a teacher in the following decade.

Meanwhile, he was employed as a clerk, first by Mr. Ensign, of Conneaut, then by Mr. Anan Harmon of Ashtabula. The latter, among other pursuits, was a shipowner, and he employed Spencer as a boatswain's mate. After a long journey on the lake, the vessel returned to its harbor with the decks, cabins and sides covered with examples of the 17-year-old employee's flourished writings.

It was during these years of clerical service that Spencer's fascination with writing took him to a deeper level of expression beyond the letters and lines of practice he had been so intent upon thus far. Rather, he now used his penmanship to express his feelings and thoughts in the form of poetry. His earliest recorded poems date from his time in Kingsville at age 14, but their numbers increased during the following years, as did the substance of their content. He composed poems easily and on a variety of subjects; some were humorous and sentimental, while others dealt with temperance and religious themes. He also wrote poetry which was historical and romantic in nature. Many dealt with his love for natural beauty, and, of course, for his faithful Muse, the pen.

Throughout his life, Spencer would compose verses for every occasion—as brief introductions to his public addresses, as concluding thoughts in the record books he authored while in public office, and as phrases of inspiration to his students. Examples of these are plentiful. On April 3, 1839 in the journal of Ashtabula County Historical Society, he wrote:

*Gather we from the shadowy past  
The struggling beams that linger late,  
Ere o'er these flickering lights is cast  
The shroud that none can penetrate,  
While yet the toil-worn pioneer  
Leans on his staff and bids us hear.*

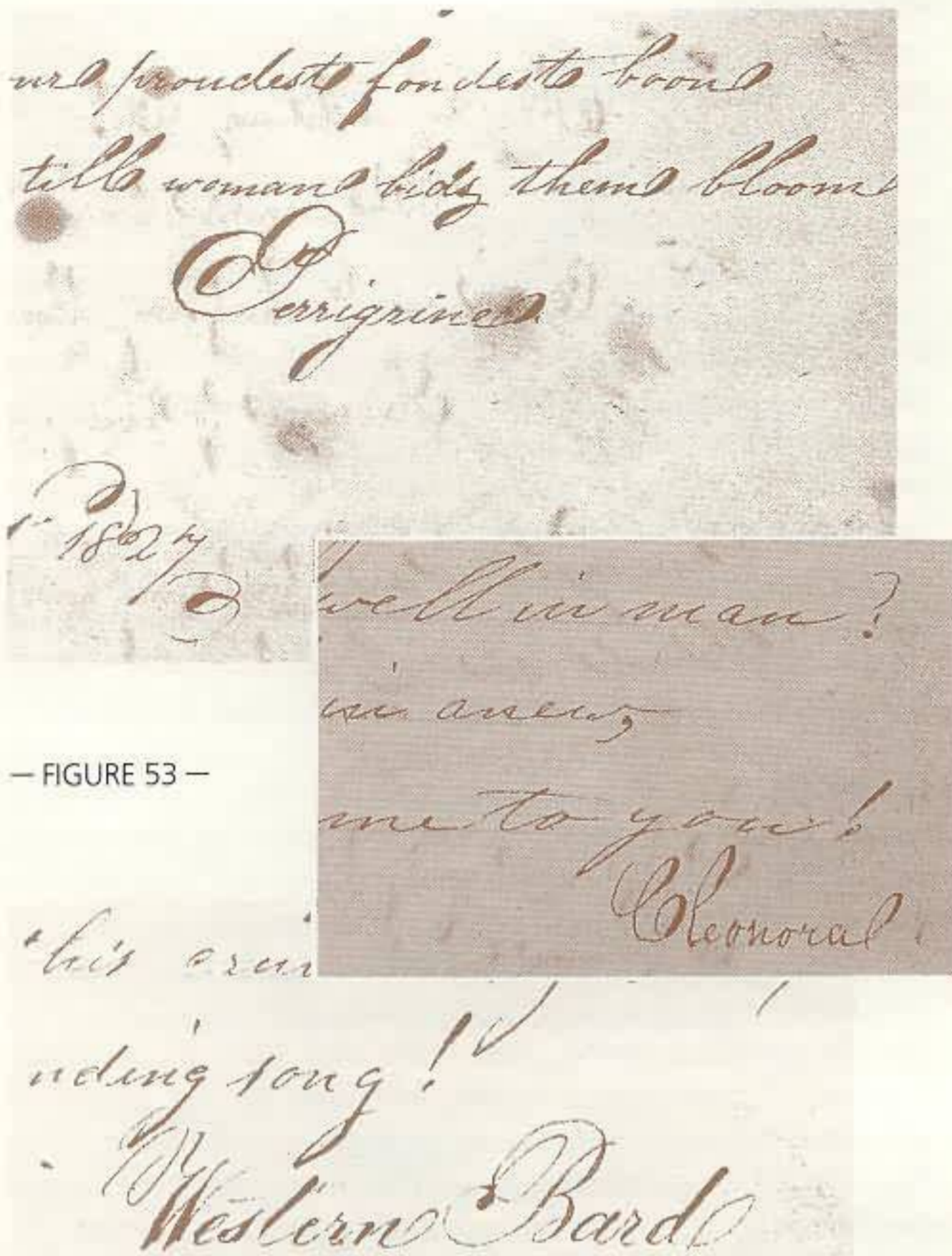
In his later years, while instructing students in his log cabin seminary (known as Jericho), he would often take tunes of familiar songs and compose new verses for his pupils to sing. Thus, with all the youngsters chanting in unison, Spencer infused the sense of rhythm in writing to his students. One of his favorite singing rhymes was the following:

*Plain to the eye, and gracefully combined  
To train the muscles and inform the mind.*

Many of the poems he created were simply signed "Spencer," yet it is interesting to note that he chose several pseudonyms as well to establish his authorship. The most



common of these were "Cleonorah," "Perrigrine" and "Western Bard," and it is surmised that this peculiarity may have been born out of his desire to imitate his favorite poet, Robert Burns.



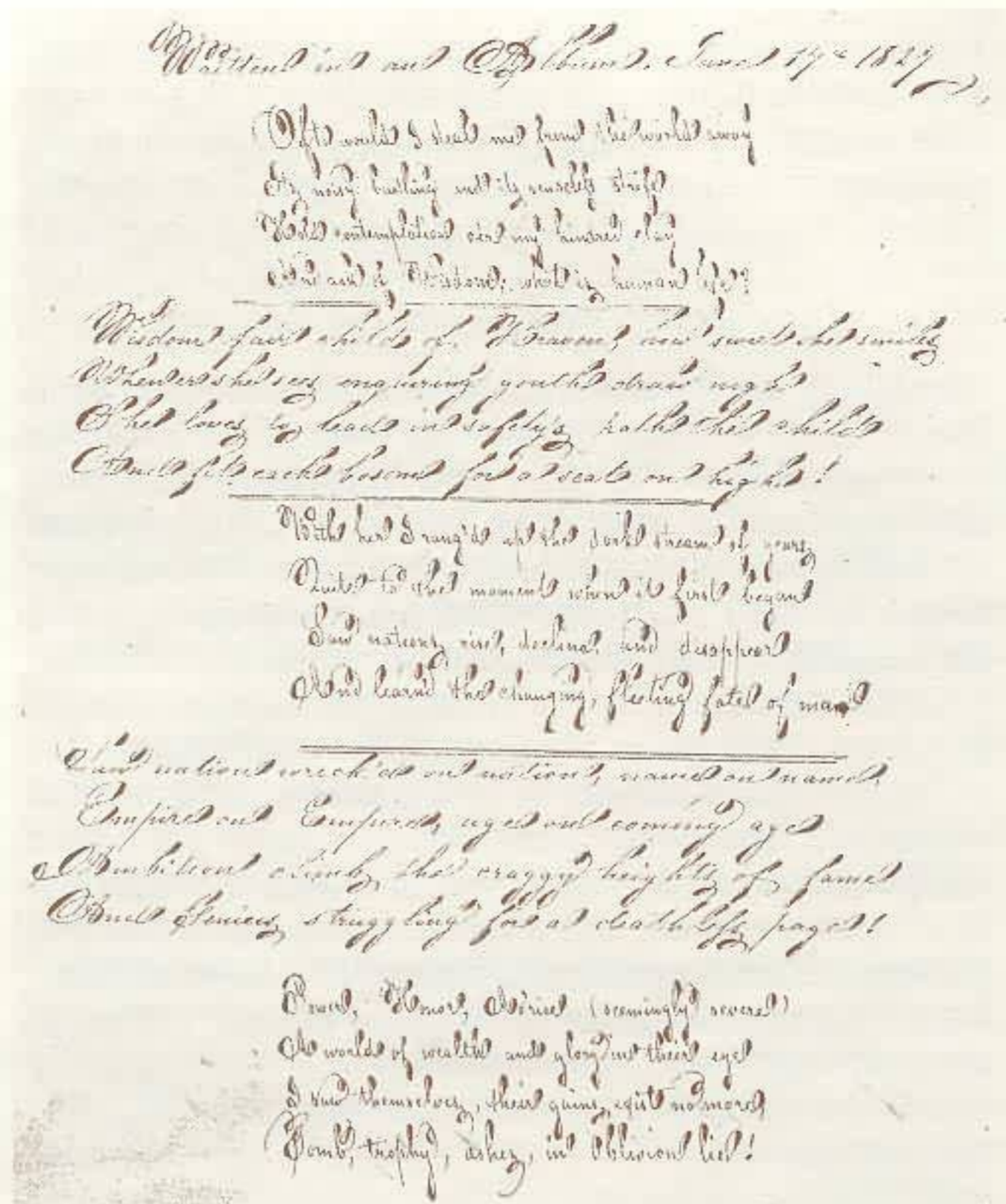
— FIGURE 53 —

Excerpts from the poems of Platt R. Spencer, courtesy of the Geneva Public Library.

The hand written poems of Spencer were striking for his experimental use of letter forms that often displayed a somewhat random placement of shaded strokes from one word, stanza or poem to another. In some, there were verses of back-slanted lettering that alternated with verses of a vertical inclination within the same composition. A number of poems displayed heavily shaded lettering, while other poems were not shaded at all.

With such a zest for poetic verse, Platt Rogers Spencer did indeed compile a lengthy assemblage of poems. As history reveals, he would not publish a writing system until his forty-eighth year. It is now considered that perhaps these poems written between 1816 and the 1830's served as a "trial ground" for developing the uniformity of style and weight which became the hallmark of Spencer's hand.

In the period from 1822–1824, he studied to become a lawyer at Kingsville, under the direction of Samuel Wheeler and Roger W. Griswold, both prominent attorneys of the time. However, Spencer's first interests prevailed, and in 1824 he left his law training to pursue the vocation he enjoyed so much in his early days—that of teaching. He toured the region surrounding his home, teaching in common schools and offering special instruction in writing, eventually widening his travels to include Pennsylvania and New York. As a penman, his reputation grew, and garnered with it was his increasing success in oratory, public debate and journalism, which brought him comparable acclaim.



— FIGURE 54 —

### PERSIS DUTY SPENCER

While Spencer's fame spread throughout the countryside, it is noted also that in his personal habits, he was quite fond of drink and socializing. This aspect of his life and subsequent victory over alcoholism was a focal point of acclaim for Spencer in his later years, and became an important turning point in his life. Much credit for his change towards temperance and his ultimate success in business is directly attributed to the woman who became his wife, companion, and life-long source of support and encouragement: Persis Warren Duty (Spencer). So significant was her influence on the life of Platt Rogers Spencer that it is difficult



**Persis Warren Duty Spencer. So significant was her influence on the life of Platt Rogers Spencer that it is difficult to chronicle his achievements without giving deserved recognition to this remarkable woman.**

— FIGURE 55 —



to chronicle an historical recording of Spencer's achievements without giving deserved attention to this remarkable woman. In the late 1890's, the youngest surviving daughter of Platt and Persis Spencer, (Persis) Ellen Spencer Mussey, gave what became the only thorough account of her mother's life. From this, titled "A Sketch of the Life of Persis Duty Spencer," we excerpt the following:

*Persis Duty was the eldest daughter of Ebenezer and Sallie Warren Duty, and was born at Half Moon, New York, in November 1806 . . . . The Duty family must have lived in New York state only a short time, having previously lived at Ackworth, New Hampshire, to which place they returned soon after Persis' birth. Her father left his family there and went to Ohio on the Western Reserve evidently to prospect for a home for his family. He is described as a man of heroic build and noted for his physical strength. During the War of 1812 he raised a company for the defense of Ashtabula Harbor. His father, Mark Duty, was a soldier in the war of the Revolution . . . . Mrs. Sallie Warren Duty was the daughter of Moses Warren, also a soldier in the war of the Revolution, and a U.S. pensioner dying in 1851 in Warrensville, Ohio. He and his large family were the pioneer settlers of this town which was named for him . . . .*

*Little is known of Persis' mother Sallie Warren Duty, but that she was a small woman of the brunette type who had, much against her father's will, left her home of comparative luxury to marry the handsome, adventuresome Ebenezer Duty, and that she bore the hardships of her lot with remarkable fortitude. Persis often spoke of her mother with loving veneration, particularly of her mother's abhorrence of the use of all kinds of intoxicating beverages. It was the custom in those days to serve some kind of liquor at quiltings, house raisings, etc., but Sallie Warren Duty always refused to partake of that form of hospitality, and this stand usually was the cause of much criticism. Evidently "turning down the glass" was as much a subject of remark a century ago as now, but little Persis inherited her mother's dislike of liquor, and her moral courage as well.*

*Mrs. Sallie Warren Duty died in 1818 at Painesville, Ohio, leaving a family of eight children of which the eldest daughter Persis was only twelve years old. She was a competent and devoted little mother to the family until her father remarried. There were two sets of twins in this family, Daniel and Andrew a year older than Persis, and Louisa and Lovisa several years younger, so that the cares upon the little mother were unusually taxing. Even at this early age, Persis showed the same devotion and stability of purpose which marked her entire life. Struggling with the cares of a house and family she still seized with avidity the meager opportunities of that pioneer country for an education, so that she was able later to secure the much coveted position of a teacher in the rural schools.*

*Persis Duty met Platt Rogers Spencer and became well acquainted with him while they were both members of the household of Dr. and Mrs. Elijah Coleman of Ashtabula. Dr. Coleman was one of the prominent physicians of the Western Reserve and his wife Phoebe Spencer Coleman was the older sister of Platt Spencer, a woman of strong character and much originality. She held Persis Duty in high esteem and when she saw that she was becoming deeply interested in her brother Platt, warned her of his too convivial habits, and of the eccentricities that so often accompany genius,*

*but to no avail. Persis knew that Platt was deeply in love with a very beautiful young woman in Kingsville who had, however, finally broken their engagement on account of his weaknesses, and had almost immediately married another. This blow seemed but to endear Mr. Spencer to her the more and she said that if he was to be saved to society and family, she believed that with the Lord's help she could do it. In any event she felt that her only happiness would be as his wife, her only sorrow to be denied his companionship. They were married in April 1828 at the residence of Dr. and Mrs. Coleman in Ashtabula, and, renting a small house in that town, went to house-keeping and there their eldest child, Robert, was born in June 1829. But the wanderlust, always strong in Mr. Spencer, combined with his intemperate habits, caused him to wander away from his wife and home more and more, and the second son Henry Harvey Spencer came to a sad mother whose heart was still more saddened when her babe passed away at the end of three months. This death seemed a great shock to the Father but in no way changed his course of life and when the third child, a daughter, came, Mrs. Spencer took her children to Geneva and accepted the position of teacher in a school near the lake shore. That winter, with two little ones to support and her husband wandering in the East, must have been a very Gethsemane of agony to the heart of Persis Spencer. She was ill, and her sorrow seemed to have left its mark upon her baby girl, but still she prayed and struggled on until at last with the approach of spring her husband appeared, and together they re-established a home, and from that time there was a marked improvement in the fortunes of the re-united couple. Mr. Spencer's fame as the author of the Spencerian Penmanship began to spread and his poems were frequently published in the newspapers and magazines. Above all, he became active in temperance work, and was an impassioned and eloquent speaker. He was aided in all his work by his wife. While the babies came to her willing arms until eleven had been born to her, yet she was ever ready to encourage her husband in his hours of struggle against temptation, and to relieve him of business cares so that he might be free to perfect his system of penmanship, or aid the cause of temperance.*

*Her own works of charity were many. She promoted the formation of temperance societies, and aided individual cases of victims of the drink habit. Frequently she would nurse some poor creature who was in the pangs of delirium tremens, and after that was over, get him to sign the pledge and feed, clothe and house him until he was able to start life anew. One of the cases which she assisted was a neighbor woman who, while ill, had contracted the opium habit. In this case Mr. and Mrs. Spencer offered her a substantial sum in money if she would do without opium for a year, and finally Mrs. Spencer brought the woman to her own home and put her in the guest chamber while they made a successful fight against the drug habit together.*

*While she was ever ready to assist both neighbors and strangers in trouble, yet she was first of all the devoted wife and mother. Of an even temperament, she was ever ready to encourage her husband when discouraged, and would sit admiringly by when he discoursed in his most charming style on Robert Burns or other favorite poets or told stories in his inimitably witty way. Each child, as it came, seemed to her a new revelation of loveliness and another opportu-*



nity for the out-pouring of mother love. Her good judgment made her a wise counselor to her children as she had been to her husband and she commanded their respect as well as their love.

One of her older sons says he remembers that in early life his mother sometimes lost control of her temper, and that on one occasion when she had spoken sharply she afterwards called the family together and confessed her fault and said that with the Lord's help she would never do so again, and she kept that resolution absolutely.

She was very fond of reading, particularly history and biography, and when nursing her babies, usually sat with a book in one hand. While her voice was low and sweet and her laugh spontaneous and musical, yet she could not sing or carry even a simple tune, but she had a mother's way of crooning lullabies to her children which they can never forget.

She was a devout member of the Baptist Church and deeply religious, so much so that her family used to remonstrate with her when she avowed herself "a miserable sinner," for she seemed to them an unselfish saint.

She was a stately woman and presided over her large household with much dignity, welcoming to her home and table her husband's distinguished guests, and the wayfarer man or woman with equal courtesy. She was an excellent housekeeper and worked side by side with "the help"; usually daughters of neighboring farmers, teaching them how to cook, wash, iron or clean and care for the house. No task seemed menial to her if it had for its object the comfort of her family.

She was accustomed to say that she was never so happy as when her children were little, and she could stand by the bedside of each one before she went to sleep, and know that they were all well and safe.

She was fifty years old when her youngest child was born, and when this little daughter Emma was three months old, a grandson was born in the old Spencer home, the child of Robert Spencer and his fair young wife, Sarah, who soon faded away leaving a motherless babe. Mrs. Spencer suckled her grandson and own baby for several months and gave them of her rich vitality.

For twelve years Mr. Spencer was Treasurer of Ashtabula County, which required his presence much of the time at Jefferson, while Mrs. Spencer remained at the home in Geneva. After he retired from this office Mr. Spencer began to bring out in engraved copies and copybook form the Spencerian Penmanship, and he was also appointed head of the penmanship department in the Bryant and Stratton chain of Business Colleges, with local colleges from Boston to Chicago. He also had spring and fall terms of classes in penmanship at Jericho, the log house on the Spencer farm in northern Geneva. Thither came the pioneer teachers of penmanship to learn of the Master. Many of them had little but the "scrip" for the journey and these were often allowed to work for their board in the Spencer household. All of these interests of Mr. Spencer's added largely to the responsibilities of Mrs. Spencer, but she assumed them without complaint. Her five sons and four daughters were, next to her husband, her dearest concern, but she found time to make the Spencer home what we would today call a "social center." Mr. Spencer provided a complete chest of carpenter's tools, placed in the horse barn opposite the house, from which any neighbor was privileged to borrow the tool he needed at that moment. Mr. and Mrs. Spencer

established a free library, the first one in Ashtabula County in their school district, and maintained it for many years at their expense. As their sons and daughters grew up to manhood, they hired competent teachers and established a kind of high school in Jericho, and the older children of the neighborhood were welcomed to the educational privileges provided for the Spencer children . . . .

The Spencer home was set in a noble farm of two hundred acres, with the public road running through the center of it. The house was long and low and white, with three front doors, each over-hung with vines. The yard had been laid out by an English gardener, Mr. Crouch, and had gravelled walks bordered with shrubs. Along the white fence was a noble row of tall maple trees, and to the south a large garden of flowers and vegetables. Back of the house was a babbling brook and beyond that a big apple orchard and still beyond that was a back-ground of forest trees. The house was flanked by barns and all the usual buildings of a big farm, but dearest of all was the log house called Jericho with its northern light of many windows and its big fireplace in the south end.

On a Sunday afternoon in summer you might meet Mr. and Mrs. Spencer accompanied by children and friends strolling over the well-tilled acres, or rambling in the carefully preserved groves of maples and oaks. She was a large woman of a noble build, with a kind but keen dark eye, and softly waving hair, purple black in color, and her hands were well formed, but large and gave the feeling of strength and tenderness.

To the end of her days she had the rich color on her cheek of a young girl and she walked with a free firm step. But when her sons and her daughters were all grown save Ellen and Emma the two youngest, when fame and fortune had come to her beloved husband, the strong self-reliant wife and mother was stricken, and then followed an illness of four years when those who had leaned on her had the sorrow of seeing her become feeble and gradually fade away. No murmur passed her lips, but gradually she gave up her activities and became a little child. On August 26th 1862, in the fifty-sixth year of her age, her soul passed on to the Heavenly Mansions. Those who saw that desolate house will never forget how her husband grieved for the wife of his youth and his mature manhood. Truly her sons and her daughters rise up and call her blessed.

Such was the life and influence of Persis Duty Spencer. It is written that immediately after their marriage, Persis resolutely persuaded her husband to seek their homestead off in the wild countryside several miles from Geneva, Ohio, her purpose being to avoid a location with easily travelled roads. Making their way along the shore of Lake Erie in a rowboat, they landed at the mouth of Indian Creek, and selected for their home an abandoned cabin in the vicinity. Going then to Geneva, they bought this tract of densely wooded land and returned to live there, later moving inland to establish their permanent home. Quoting from J. Carson Webster's biographical article about Junius R. Sloan (Spencer's son-in-law) in *Art In America* (Summer 1952):

*In this region of 'untrodden ways'—yet not of idyllic springs, but by the powerful waters of the great lake; and in the rigors of the Frontier setting chosen by the bride—the drama was played out. The new husband rebelled at first against his destiny, and would make his way to the towns for joyous reunions; but the return was painful. He would reach home*





Painting of the Spencer homestead by Junius Sloan, 1861. Located on Jericho Road in Geneva, Ohio, this was the residence and farm site of Platt and Persis Spencer for over 20 years, until their deaths in 1864 and 1862. The Jericho Log Seminary, at which Mr. Spencer taught his system of penmanship, was located near the home, just on the other side of Jericho Road.

again much battered-up, for the rough and ill-marked wood-roads would have been hard to follow with any comfort even when sober. Finally, surrounded by the powers of nature, and in the presence of a superb lack of pity displayed by his wife, the resolution came. He reformed. By 1832 he had publicly become a 'tee-totaler'; and throughout his life he urged that solution as the only safe one. The spot at the mouth of Indian Creek, where he had first touched the shore of a new life, became almost hallowed ground in the memories of his family . . . . In the later idealization of the father by the children, this early triumph threw a kind of consecration over his life which spurred them on to advance his work, not in fraternal rivalry alone, but as if also in the service of a sacred cause.

So it was that Persis succeeded in her mission to reform Platt Rogers Spencer. As the years went by, many stories circulated about Spencer's early drinking bouts, and several were recorded by his son, Lyman. Recorded, too, were the legendary examples of his resolution against intoxicants. One drinking incident, in particular, was said to have been his last. The story refers to the time when he was living in the log cabin in which he and his new bride first resided, located near Indian Creek, where the steep-sided stream flowed one half mile into the waters of Lake Erie. Spencer had been to the town of Geneva, where he had liberally partaken of liquid refreshment with his friends. After many hours of such enjoyment, he bade his companions goodbye and proceeded to find his way home. There was a short-cut to his house through the woods and over the stream. A footbridge spanned the creek. Ice was breaking at the time and the water was high. In the darkness, Spencer stumbled in his efforts to cross the bridge and fell into the water. Scrambling out upon the shore, he called for his wife. She met him with a tin tallow candle lantern, and guided her husband home. When he entered the cabin, he went directly to his tool chest, and without changing his clothes, he found an auger. Standing upon a stool, Spencer is said to have bored a hole through the mantle piece above his hearth. As he surveyed it, he remarked: "I'll never take another drink until that hole grows over."

In recording such stories about his father, Lyman also

noted in his journal Spencer's own temperance pledge, which read:

*I hereby pledge God and the world that I will never taste another drop of liquor.*

And again, in his journal, Lyman wrote:

*Around the house where he had learned to drink he marked off a track at a radius of eighty rods, and vowed that he would never again enter within that limit, and he never did.\**

So thorough was Persis' reformation of him, and so resolute was Spencer, that he led the first temperance movement in Ohio, and was a prominent figure throughout his life in this mission.

## THE SPENCERIAN SYSTEM OF WRITING

In the late 1830s, Spencer continued to travel to local common schools, but as news of his own school spread by way of former students, he found more students willing to come in search of his unique educational program. For over ten years he taught his penmanship by means of giving small slips of paper bearing his writing to his students. He would fill a whole sheet of paper with lines of writing, and then cut the individual lines apart. Once this was done, Spencer would place these narrow slips into a linen pouch. Then, he would give them to his students as exemplars of writing for study.

The Spencerian System of Writing, which was becoming more formalized as the result of his teaching, was a significant change from the handwriting styles that had dominated the American classrooms. Writing models, formerly, were from England, and were engraved by means of copper plates, rendering the line quality fine and consistent. However, the forms, themselves, were based on circular shapes, made laboriously with disconnected strokes, and hence, the style was slow and difficult to teach and learn.

\*By this quote Spencer meant that he would never let any liquor come within eighty rods (1,320 feet) of his home.





— FIGURE 57 —

Prior to the publishing of his copy books in the 1850's, Spencer would carry this pouch during his years as an itinerant penman. After instructing his students, he would give each pupil a sample of his own writing to use as a model for practice. Such pieces of paper became known as copy slips.

By contrast, Spencer's system encouraged the more natural tendencies of the hand and arm muscles toward elliptical shapes and rapid, fluid lines. From Spencer's observations of nature, he concluded that such shapes were, indeed, more *natural* examples of curvature. They were easier to produce than circular forms, and far more graceful as well. The worn pebbles he found strewn along the Lake Erie shoreline were among his first models of such oval forms, and these, together with other sights from the countryside, created a lasting impression upon him.

In a biographical study of his father, Lyman P. Spencer wrote:

*The forms of ovals in letters he moulded to stones polished and rounded by the action of the water of the lake, the beautiful grace of combining lines he gathered from the vines that climbed, and winding streams that meandered the wilds in which he made his home, while ideas of order and regularity were impressed upon him by 'the wavelet's flow.'*

*To the last year of his life he was accustomed to make frequent visits to the shore of the lake to practice writing in the sand, as 'in the loved years long, long ago.' He continued to gather the smooth round stones, and sometimes introduced them to the notice of his pupils as the most perfect and beautiful illustrations of his idea of the ovals in writing. Upon a large table in his homestead where he was accustomed to write are specimens of the rounded stones which he gathered as illustrations of the ovals in the Spencerian System of Penmanship.*

Spencer's most famous poem is a testimony to this:

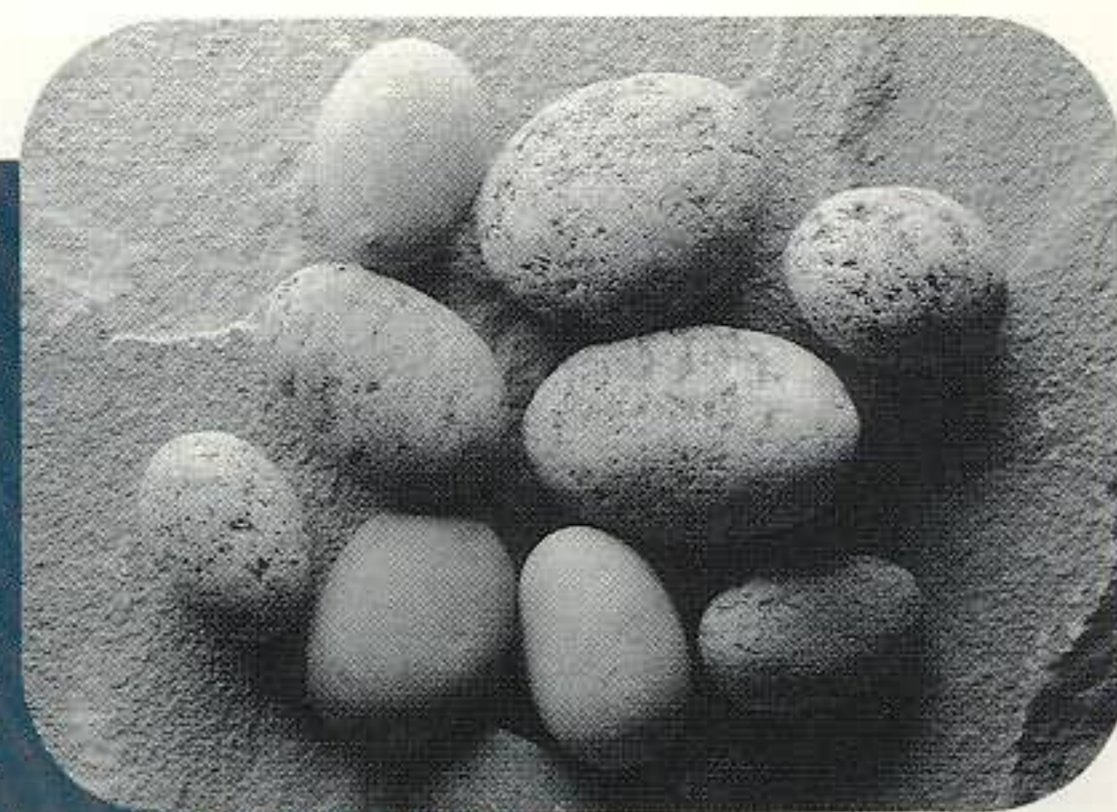


FIGURE 58 —

*The elliptical shape of beach pebbles that Spencer found along Lake Erie's shore became early models for the oval letter forms he developed.*

### Origin of Spencerian Penmanship

*Evolved 'mid nature's unpruned scenes,  
On Erie's wild and woody shore,  
The rolling wave, the dancing stream,  
The wild-rose haunts in days of yore.*

*The opal, quartz and ammonite,  
Gleaming beneath the wavelet's flow,  
Each gave its lesson—how to write—  
In the loved years of long ago.*

*I seized the forms I loved so well—  
Compounded them as meaning signs,  
And to the music of the swell  
Blent them with undulating vines.*

*Thanks, Nature, for the impress pure,  
Those tracings in the sand are gone;  
But while love shall for thee endure,  
Their grace and ease will still live on.*

As years went by, his style of writing became more widely accepted than any other writing system, and in the 1850s, became the standard writing system taught throughout America. Quoting from the "History of Ashtabula County, Ohio (1898)":

*... In style he chose the golden mean between the labored fullness of the round-hand and the rigid sharpness of the angular, aiming to combine the legibility of the one with the ease and directness of execution of the other. He introduced, also, improved forms of capitals, a simple and beautiful analysis and classification of both small letters and capitals, and a tasteful mingling of light and shade. With these he combined a correct theory of position and movement, and a free use of exercises to discipline and develop the muscles employed to wield the pen.*

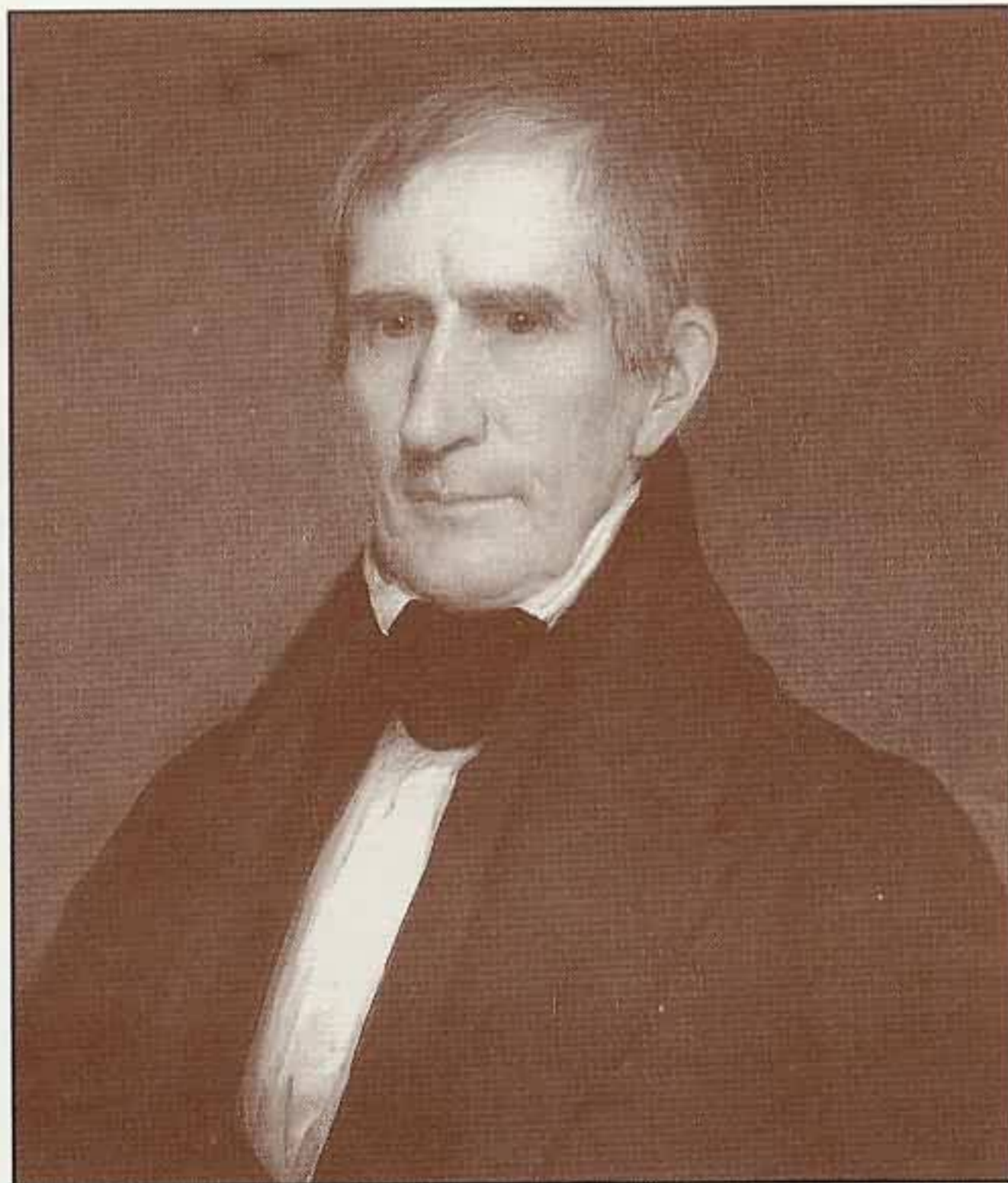


Amidst his teaching, his public speaking, his farming and his family, Platt Rogers Spencer was appointed Assessor of Ashtabula County in 1837. His assessment list has been preserved as a model of handwriting executed with a quill pen. Often he would compose short poems and include them on the lists to add a touch of humor, or express the nature of his service at the time. One such poem, written near the last of his assessment tallies, read:

*List, List, O List!  
we cry through the land,  
Til Death, the Grand Assessor,  
comes to make the last demand,  
When it shall be shown,  
and fully known beyond this mortal sphere,  
Who loved their Country, God,  
and Truth, and made a true list here.*

In 1838 he was elected Treasurer of Ashtabula County, a position he retained for twelve years. One of his first acts in this period was to establish the Ashtabula Historical and Philosophical Society, of which he was the secretary until his death. In all his endeavors, his public spirit, enthusiasm, kindly nature, flawless integrity and desire to help his fellow man endeared him to the people. He continued his Fourth of July speeches in the Ohio and New York areas, and frequently spoke out in favor of temperance. Quoting from the *History of Ashtabula County, Ohio (1898)*:

*... His own prolonged struggle with the tempter in earlier life—in which he was helped to gain the victory by the kindly, Christian influence of his wife—brought this subject home to him with a vital interest. From the first he took the strong and safe ground of total abstinence from everything which could intoxicate. He was active in forming and main-*



— FIGURE 59 —

*William Henry Harrison, 9th President of the United States. Photo courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.*

*taining temperance associations, was constantly using his personal influence, and frequently his gifts as a public speaker and poet in behalf of this cause. This stanza is from one of his temperance poems, entitled 'Touch Not, Taste Not':*

*'Touch not the juice that woos the taste,  
Its promises are false and frail;  
Its siren pleasures quickly waste,  
And all its proffered treasures fail.*

Spencer considered slavery America's greatest blight, and devoted himself to its abolition. As stated in the *History of Ashtabula County, Ohio (1898)*:

*... Human slavery was a thing abhorrent to his generous, liberty-loving soul; and he joined earnestly in the work of freeing his country from that terrible blot of crime and suffering.*

He frequently spoke out against slavery in his public addresses, particularly those on the Fourth of July. One such speech attracted the attention of Congressman Joshua R. Giddings, and marked the beginning of their friendship and association in the effort to raise public awareness of this vital issue.

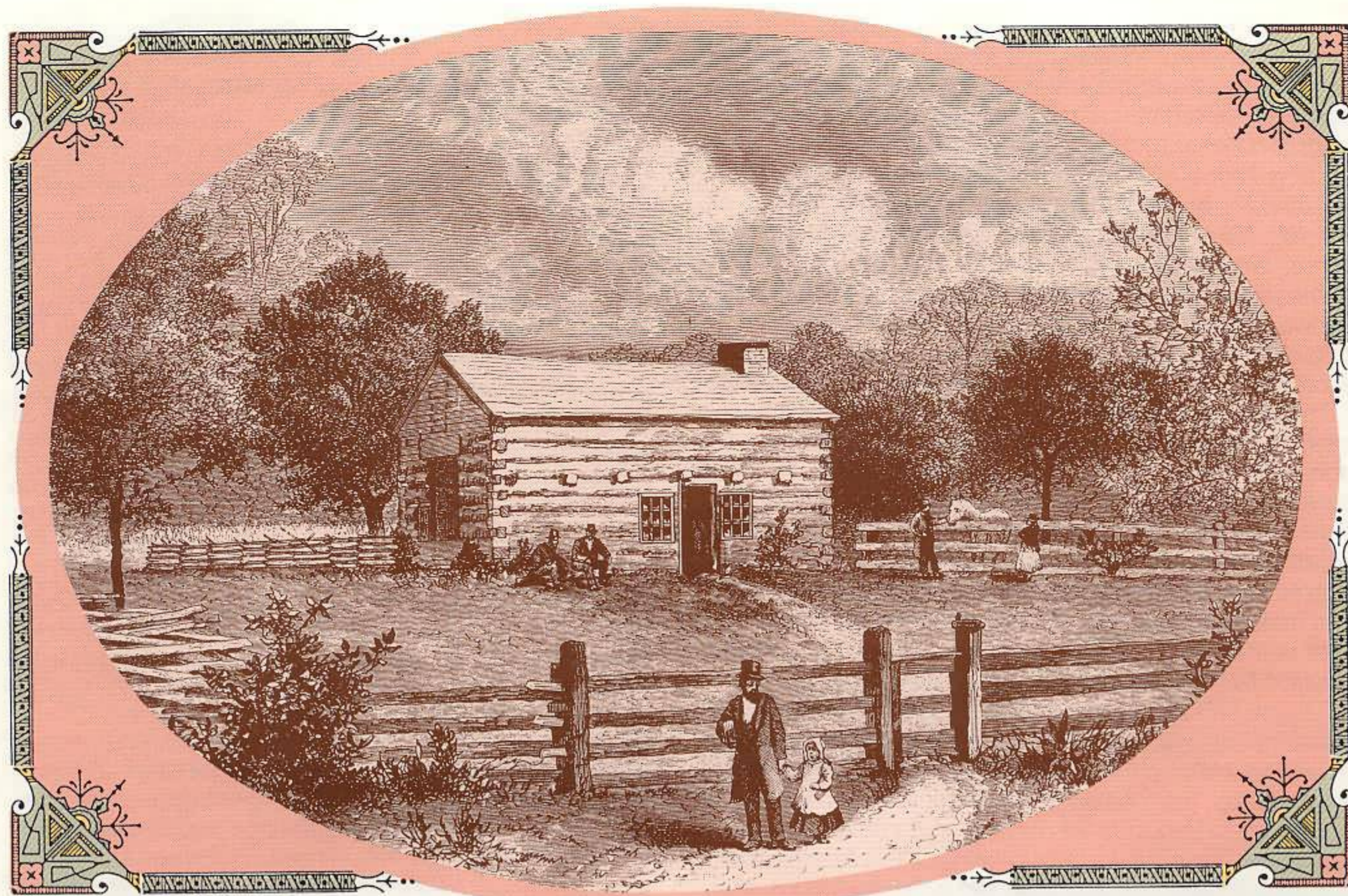
Spencer's personal efforts towards the good of mankind bore testimony to a deep, personal conviction. In the summer months of 1840, he actively campaigned for William Henry Harrison's election to the presidency. Among Spencer's contributions to this cause was a 20-foot linen banner, which he made and lettered by hand. Written on the banner are the words: "William H. Harrison, His 'Conscience-Keeper's' Are Patriotism, Honesty and Ability; His 'Cage' Is The Hearts Of Americans." The word "Geneva" also appears on the banner, and in the far bottom right corner of the linen scroll, Spencer signed his name. This was the election remembered for the phrase "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too," with "Tippecanoe" referring to Harrison, and Tyler being John Tyler of Virginia. Harrison won the election, and, in gratitude, offered Spencer a position in the Post Office department. Spencer refused the opportunity, seeking instead to remain doing what he enjoyed most of all: teaching.

It is unfortunate that Spencer is least known for his significant role in establishing the first commercial and business colleges in America. It was his intention to prepare students practically for the business world, with an education that combined artistic discipline—as taught in his writing system—with other skills necessary to enter the commercial community.

Spencer had, in 1848, won widespread acclaim for the publication of his writing system, entitled *Spencer & Rice's System of Business and Ladies' Penmanship*. Printed in the form of copy slips with accompanying rules and explanations, he was joined in this venture by Victor M. Rice, a former pupil of Spencer who later became superintendent of the New York Public School System.

In the next four years, due to the popularity of this publication and the encouragement of his former pupils, he established the first Spencerian Commercial College in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The institution officially opened its doors in 1852; Mr. Spencer was the principal, and his eldest son, Robert C., and eldest daughter, Sarah, were among the teachers. The college was successful, but Platt R. Spencer's health soon became impaired from over work and exhaus-





— FIGURE 60 —

Platt R. Spencer's log cabin seminary, located on Jericho Road, across from his home in Geneva, Ohio. From 1853 to 1863, Spencer taught penmanship here, espousing the beauties of his system of handwriting to students from all over the country.

tion. As a result, the college was sold to Mr. Peter Duff, and renamed Duff College, so that Spencer could alleviate his duties as a full time teacher and devote more time to administering other schools.

Stated in the *New Spencerian Compendium of Penmanship*, 1879:

*Among the pupils of the Log Seminary was H.D. Stratton, afterwards celebrated as the chief of the founders of the Bryant & Stratton chain of Business Colleges. Mr. Stratton became acquainted with the talented James W. Lusk, through Mr. Spencer, at the Log Seminary, and they there decided to open, in combination with Mr. H.B. Bryant, the 'Bryant, Lusk and Stratton Business College,' in Cleveland, Ohio (now one of the four Spencerian Business Colleges of the Spencer Brothers established in New York, Washington, Cleveland, and Milwaukee). The second college was soon after established at Buffalo, New York, Robert C. Spencer becoming a partner. They were then both styled the 'Bryant, Spencer, Lusk & Stratton Business Colleges.' From these institutions was extended the chain of 40 links, in the United States and provinces of Canada. In the establishment of new colleges, Platt R. Spencer's co-operation was secured, and, during the autumn and winter seasons, he devoted much of his time to giving instruction in those rapidly growing institutions. He was the Superintendent of Penmanship for the entire 'International Chain.'*

With an ever increasing list of administrative responsibili-

ties, Spencer returned to his homestead in Geneva, Ohio to teach. Across the road from his home was a farm that he had purchased. On this farm near Jericho Road (now Meyers Road) stood a log cabin, known as the "Jericho log seminary," or simply "Jericho." The years spent teaching here were among his most cherished times. In an article for the *Geneva Times* dated February 23, 1891, Pluma L. Cowles, a former student of Spencer, wrote:

*... Before this building was dedicated to the art of Penmanship, two most successful, select schools were held within its walls on successive winters. The young people of the Spencer family and many others thus enjoyed academic privileges at home. It must have been some thirty-nine years ago. First class teachers were employed, tuition paid, and many of the advantages of the then far famed Kingsville academy were enjoyed in Jericho. Miss Lucinda Bachelor, now Mrs. Henry Sullivan, and Miss Lucinda Parker were the teachers. A large number of the young people in the vicinity, and some from adjoining towns, there made rapid ascent of the Hill of Science within these famous walls. The interior was plastered and fitted up with suitable seats, tables, and blackboards, the north end of the building amply lighted with windows in tiers, to this being added the cheerful glow of the old fireplace, making a most comfortable and cheerful school room for the happy company of students assembled. Its walls rang with the old school songs then used, and echoed on rhetorical days with the speeches of the statesmen of the past.*



... Just how long after this select school closed ere these classic walls were dedicated to disseminating the "art divine" I cannot recall, but think it was very soon after. When it became known that students could learn the art Spencerian from its noted author in this quiet, rustic retreat, they came flocking from all quarters, and for many years, until his death in 1864, Mr. Spencer there taught his unrivaled system of Penmanship to its earnest and willing seekers. Many times, almost every section of the country was represented, students remaining many months, each to perfect their knowledge of the art that they might go out to impart it to others, or to fill places of usefulness and responsibility as accountants, bookkeepers, and clerks.

You ask me to tell the influence this primitive seminary exerted. When one counts Lake Erie's sands, this may be done. The impetus given to all business channels with this perfected system of penmanship, the many teachers who imparted it in public and private schools throughout the country, the chain of Commercial Colleges formed for business education, the great number of men and women, then and now, holding positions of trust in business circles—all bear witness to the fact that Mr. Spencer was one of the greatest benefactors and educators of his time.

... Those privileged to be instructed by Mr. Spencer in the old seminary and saw him in his quiet home life, saw him at his best. He filled this humble school-room with sunshine, life and song. Passionately fond of poetry, he quoted, wrote and sang. To the old tunes, he composed odes to the pen, and to the beautiful, forceful influence it has exerted down the ages, through the art divine. Led by his melodious, soul-stirring voice, all would sing them until the old walls rang again. Often at noontide he charmed his willing listeners with anecdote and song; 'Auld Lang Syne,' 'Bonnie Doon,' and 'Old Folks At Home' were among his favorites. He even shed a cheerful and uplifting influence upon all around him, his manner ever genial, yet always accompanied with old time gentility and dignity.

His lectures from the blackboard before the students given daily, will never be forgotten by those who listened. Humorous, till all were filled with laughter, pathetic to tears, poetic and eloquent, while his high standard of justice and equity to all held true always, regardless of the subject taught. On the other hand, there was the most scathing sarcasm for the careless, indolent, low and narrow. Thus, daily the lives of his pupils at Jericho were molded, and caught the inspiration of his industrious and most successful life. No youth who desired a business education and was without means, was ever deterred by this, from receiving instruction at this old seminary. There was always a desk for them which they were urged to take, with a kindly 'feel at home' greeting, that they were welcome to write as long as they wished, only to make the most of their opportunities. Often those dissipated, or tempted, would be taken to his own home, and kindly cared for and encouraged to start again in the right path. Such was he, as teacher and friend.

While teaching at Jericho, Spencer endeavored to supply the expanding number of colleges with a new series of copy books. According to a eulogy printed in Bryant and Stratton's Commercial College Monthly, 1864:

... from the very infancy of the organization of commercial education in the United States, Mr. Spencer's system of Penmanship was made the standard as being at once the

most business-like, beautiful and teachable..., to this feature more than any other is due the popularity which has been acquired by the leading commercial colleges of the country.

In 1859, he released his first copy book, which was revised and reprinted in 1861 under the auspices of Phinney and Co., Buffalo, N.Y. In this he was assisted by his sons, most notably Lyman and Henry, and his dear friend and colleague (and former pupil), James W. Lusk. Subsequent editions, all of which were popular, were transferred to the house of Ivison, Blakeman & Co., New York.

The Commercial College system gained a favorable boost in the vocal and written support of James A. Garfield, who, years later, was elected 20th President of the United States. Garfield's frequent protestations against—what he considered—the unwarranted emphasis on classical subjects seemed to be in harmony with the slogan found on the stationery of the Spencerian Business College, Washington, D.C. (founded by Spencer's son, Henry): "Education for Real Life."

Garfield met Spencer in Hiram, Ohio when the latter came to lecture on the growing need for a commercial educational system. In 1878, then an active Congressman, Garfield wrote this account of their association and the impression Spencer had made on his life:

*I first saw Mr. Spencer in 1857, when he came to Hiram, Ohio, and delivered a lecture before the students of the Eclectic Institute. I was struck with the clearness and originality of his mind, and with the pathetic tenderness of his spirit. Soon afterwards he and his sons took charge of the department of Penmanship in the Institute, and from that time forward I was intimately acquainted with his mind, and with his heart. I have met few men who so completely won my confidence and affection.*

*The beautiful in nature and art led him a willing and happy captive. To know what books a man delights in enables us to know the man himself, and when I say that Robert Burns was one of his favorite authors, it is equivalent to saying that a keen relish for the humorous, sympathy with the lowly, and love of all that is beautiful in nature and art, were distinguishing traits of his character.*

*Like all men who are well made, he was self-made. Though his boyhood was limited by the hard lot of his pioneer life, his love for the beautiful found expression in an art which his genius raised from the grade of manual drudgery to the rank of a fine art.*

*It is honorable to undertake any worthy work, and accomplish it successfully; it is great to become the first in any such work; and it is unquestionably true that Mr. Spencer made himself the foremost penman of the world. And this he did without masters. He not only became the first penman, but he analyzed all the elements of chirography, simplified its forms, arranged them in consecutive order, and created a system which has become the foundation of instruction in the art in all the public schools of our country.*

*But his mind was too large and his sympathy too quick and active to be confined to any one pursuit. The poor and oppressed found in him a friend and champion. He was always ready to lend a helping hand to those who were struggling for a higher culture; for he had experienced in his own life the obstacles which poverty places in the pathway of generous and ambitious youth.*

*To such a nature the right of every man to his freedom was*



as clear as his right to the air and sunshine, and hence we find that in the beginning of the anti-slavery agitation, at a time when sympathy with the slave meant not only political but social ostracism, Mr. Spencer was outspoken in his denunciation of slavery in all its forms.

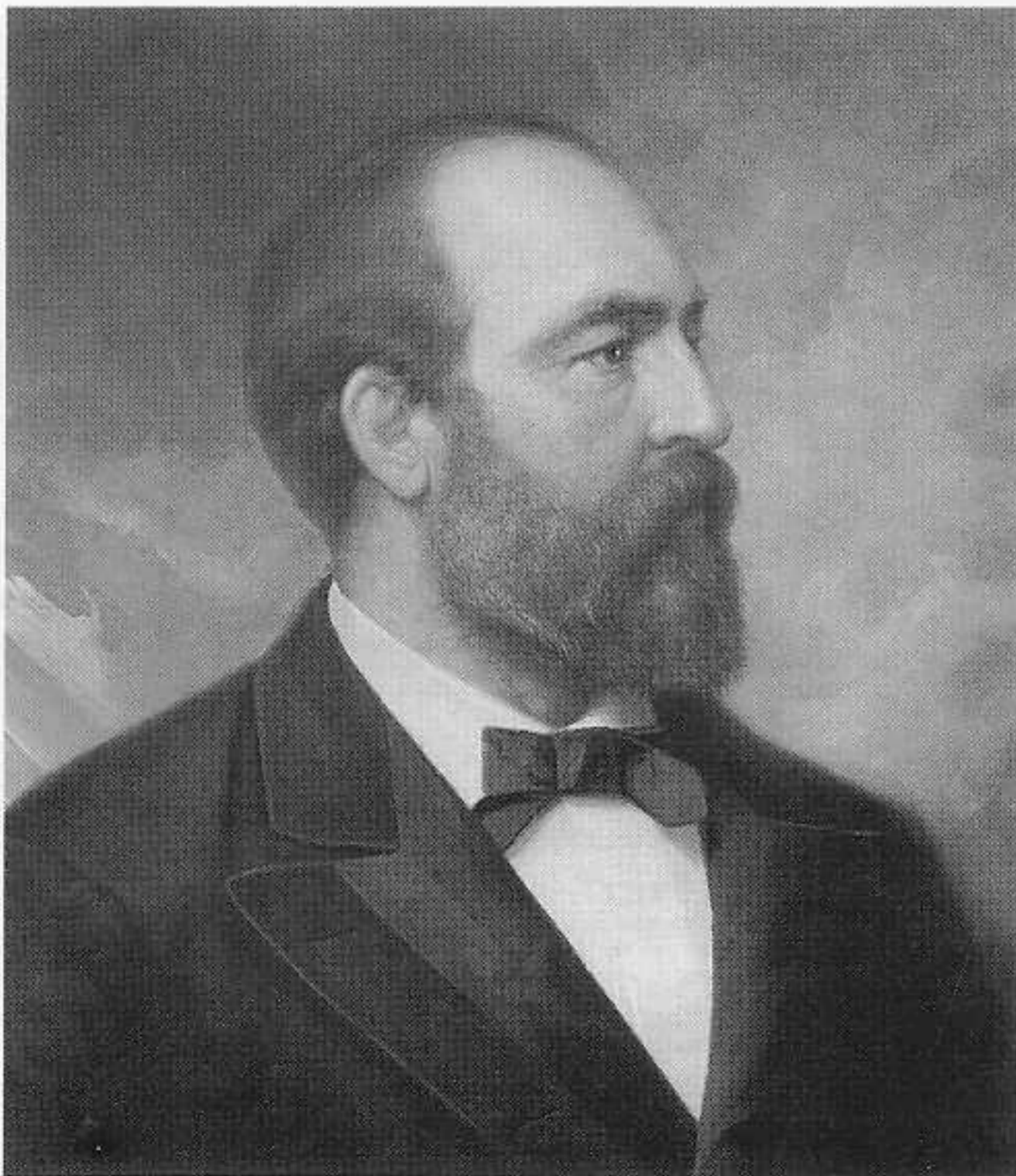
I shall never forget the ardor with which he supported the cause of the Union against the slave-holders' rebellion, and the sadness with which he referred to the fact that he was too old to serve his country in the field. He did not live to see the final triumph of the Union, but he saw the light of coming victory and shared the joy of its promise.

To the thousands of young men and women who enjoyed the benefit of his brilliant instruction, to the still larger circle of his friends and acquaintances, and to all who love a gifted, noble, and true-hearted man, the memory of his life will remain a perpetual benediction.

Washington, D.C., April 20, 1878

The extension of the Bryant and Stratton chain of colleges to an international status, by establishing such institutions in Canada, truly reflects Spencer's vision of the public's readiness to embrace commercial education. And, mostly through his children's efforts, Spencerian penmanship would reach many public school systems. Thus, Spencer and his teachings became household words. By the year of his death, in 1864, a million copies of his book had been sold, and the chain of business colleges he pioneered had become a model for business education throughout America, and remained so for many years to follow.

On August 26, 1862, after a long illness, his beloved wife, Persis, passed away. He had often told his friends and colleagues that his "usefulness in life was due to the influence of his wife who saved him, by her devotion, from the drunkard's melancholy fate." He wrote several poems to her memory, including the following:



— FIGURE 61 —

James Abram Garfield, 20th President of the United States. Photo courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.

Thou art gone from us Mother  
and the fireside is lone,  
While the dark cloud of sorrow  
veils the bright smiles of home,  
Thou art gone dearest Mother,  
the kindest and best,  
Thy toils are all over,  
thy soul is at rest.

Like the beautiful Summer,  
thy life course hath been,  
Maturing rich fruits  
from the bloom of thy spring,  
Thy pure heart unfalting  
the virtues that bloom  
Unfading beyond  
the dark vale of the tomb.

We shall meet again, Mother,  
when cares are unknown,  
Where thy pure trusting spirit  
with angels is flown.  
We shall meet again Mother,  
and greet on that shore,  
Where pain, death and parting  
assail us no more.

And, quoting again from Mrs. Pluma L. Cowles:

... He was never quite complete in himself after the death of his wife who was the light of his home. She was a woman of superior mind and elevated virtues, and to whom with her gracious helpfulness, he attributed much of his success in life. Among the many treasures from his pen, stored carefully away, I find one which he laid upon the desks of his students one chill Monday in Autumn. It has a poetical tribute to the 'Memory of Perished Years' in ornamental penmanship, and beneath is written: 'Two months ago this day my dear wife and companion, the Beloved Persis, left us and went home to the Rest which remains for the people of God. Though sad and lonely is the hearthstone and the circle over which she so long presided with humble dignity and Christian purity, but precious and consoling is the memory, the fragrance of virtue and unpretending worth that lends a tone of sacred and consoling joy to the melancholy wall of the stricken sorrowful heart.'

Signed: 'P.R. Spencer, Scr., Oct. 26, 1862—Sunday, alone.'

Spencer continued teaching during the summer months at Jericho, and overseeing the production of his major work, "The Spencerian Compendium of Penmanship." For the engraving of the many plates necessary to this work, he selected the country's foremost engraver of the day, Archibald MacLees, who, after completing his obligation to Spencer, went to Washington, D.C. to engrave the plates for United States currency. Unfortunately, Platt Rogers Spencer did not live to see his book completed. His sons released it in 1879 under the title "The New Spencerian Compendium of Penmanship," (Iverson, Blakeman and Co., New York.), and dedicated it to the memory of their father.

Platt Rogers Spencer travelled for the last time, to New York, in the winter of 1864. In that year he presented his last



lecture in the city of Brooklyn, and taught his last course of lessons at the Bryant & Stratton Business College in New York City. He had been in failing health for a number of months, due to his many activities and continued despair over the death of his wife. An illness followed for several weeks, and on the 16th of May, 1864, he passed peacefully away. This account is given of his final months in the Bryant and Stratton Commercial College Monthly of July, 1864:

*During the past winter he visited the New York College, and taught there, it is said, with greater interest and effect than at any former period. In addressing his classes, in his illustrations upon the board, and in his writing, he is said to have displayed his talents and skill in higher perfection than ever before. He expressed the opinion that his work the last day he was in New York, was the most perfect work of his life. From New York he returned to his home to die. As he lay helpless and emaciated upon his dying pillow, he asked for his pen, and when it was placed in his hand, his countenance beamed with pleasure that he still had power to grasp and move the faithful instrument—'Servant of genius, mind and will.'*

There were scores of tributes to Spencer on the occasion of his death, for he was very much a beloved national figure whose fame gave him an almost folkloric stature. One story, in particular, was retold in local newspapers many years later:

*A traveller had heard of Platt R. Spencer and his penmanship, and determined to visit him. The visitor was something of an artist and a penman and believed that Spencer had been over-rated. Reaching Geneva by stagecoach, he inquired for Spencer. He found Spencer cradling grain with others on his farm. The visitor showed Spencer some of his*

*work, which Spencer warmly praised. After looking at all the samples of lettering, drawing and writing in the visitor's portfolio, Spencer asked if he might have a scrap of paper. He selected a stalk of straw, shaped it as he was wont to point a quill pen. From the tip of his finger he drew drops of blood with his pen knife. With this he executed an unsurpassingly beautiful design, to the great astonishment of his visitor. On leaving Geneva, the guest gave Spencer unstinted praise, admitting that he had come to show Spencer up and to sell him on his own ideas.*

Indeed, the passing of "the man who taught America how to write" was truly a loss mourned throughout the land. Among the many testimonials to his life was the following, authored by his nephew, Warren P. Spencer:

A debt of gratitude is due to thee,  
Great master of the Pen!  
Thy beauteous forms, so bold, so free,  
In all the walks of life we see  
Amid the haunts of men!

Wherever commerce spreads her wings  
To bear the wealth of trade,  
This noble art its offering brings,  
And on its record daily springs  
The forms thy genius made.

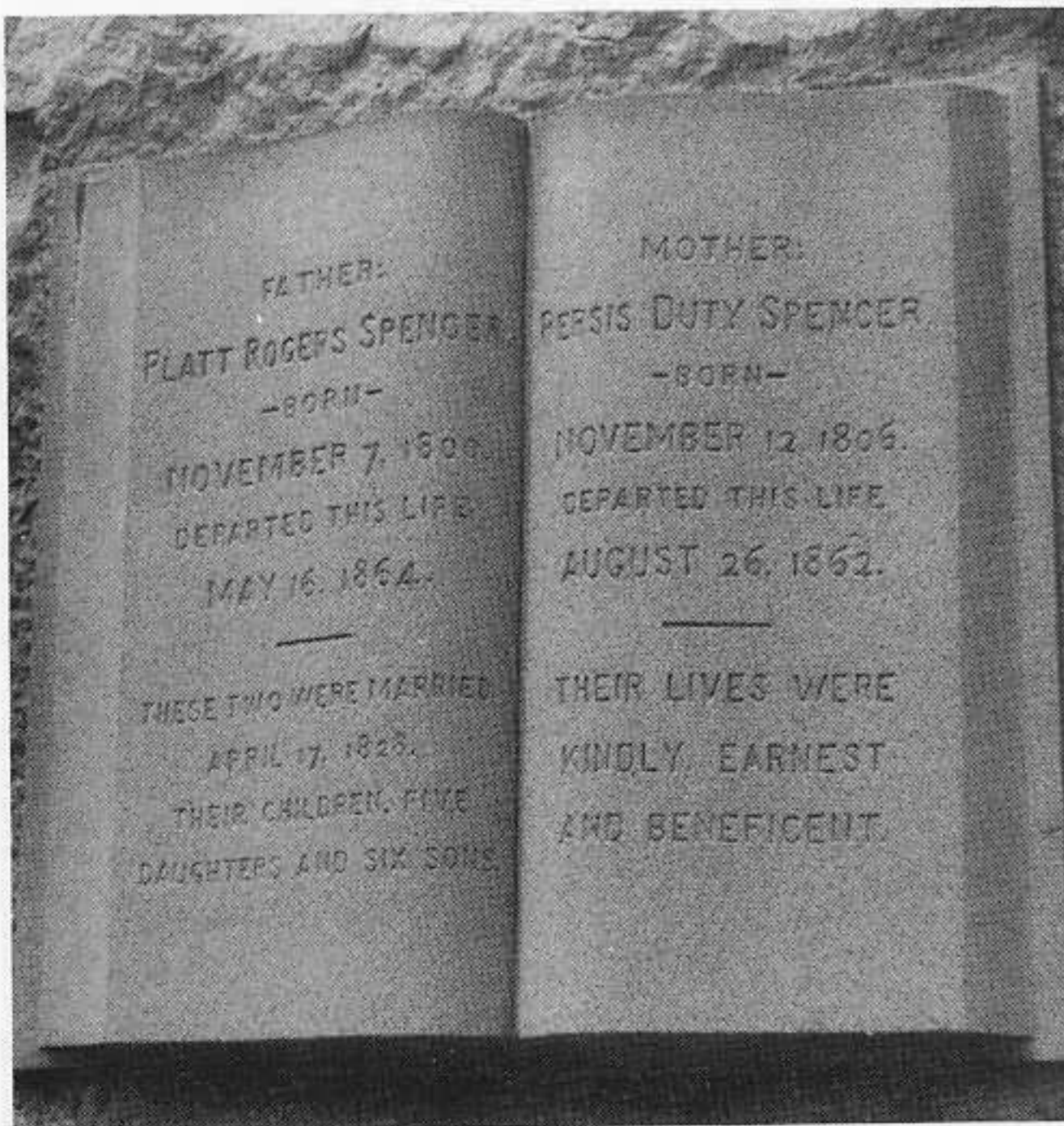
The Pen glides on, but others guide  
Its track along the page;  
But while time rolls its ceaseless tide,  
Who loves this art will point with pride  
To this, its golden age.

Nor less than in this peerless art  
Dost thou in memory shine;  
For thou wast kind and pure in heart,—  
In life's great drama was thy part  
Played with a will sublime.

Gone but too soon, Teacher and Friend.  
Yet thou hast earned thy fame;  
It lives in all thy hand hath penned,—  
The work of art with which we blend  
Thy loved and deathless name.

A large granite monument in Geneva, Ohio's Evergreen Cemetery, believed to be erected in 1883, honors Platt and Persis Spencer in a manner befitting their lives. The stone itself is roughly-hewn granite, approximately 6 feet wide, 18 inches thick and seven feet in height. On the front of the stone Spencer's famous signature stands out raised and polished, and a magnificent quill, 3 feet in length, and similarly raised in relief, is located below the signature. On the opposite face of the stone is carved a large open book, measuring 4 feet wide and 3 feet in height. Carved into its pages are the names of Platt Rogers Spencer and Persis Duty Spencer, their birth and death dates, marriage date and the numbers of their progeny. The book's conclusion reads: "Their lives were kindly, earnest and beneficent."

Approximately 10 feet from this large monument are two smaller gravestones, one for Platt and one for Persis. As to their origin, notations in several articles about Spencer that appeared in Geneva, Ohio and Buffalo, New York news-



— FIGURE 62 —

Large tablet (3 feet x 4 feet in size), engraved into the back of the Spencer memorial stone, Evergreen Cemetery, Geneva, Ohio. Carved into its pages are the names of Platt and Persis Spencer, their dates of birth and deaths, marriage date, and the number of their children.



papers from the turn-of-the-century indicate that the erection of these monuments was originally proposed by Robert C. Spencer. However, it was one of Spencer's loyal students, Mahlon J. Woodruff of New York City, who actually donated



— FIGURE 63 —

Top: The large granite monument honoring Platt R. Spencer as it appears today. Evergreen Cemetery, Geneva, Ohio.

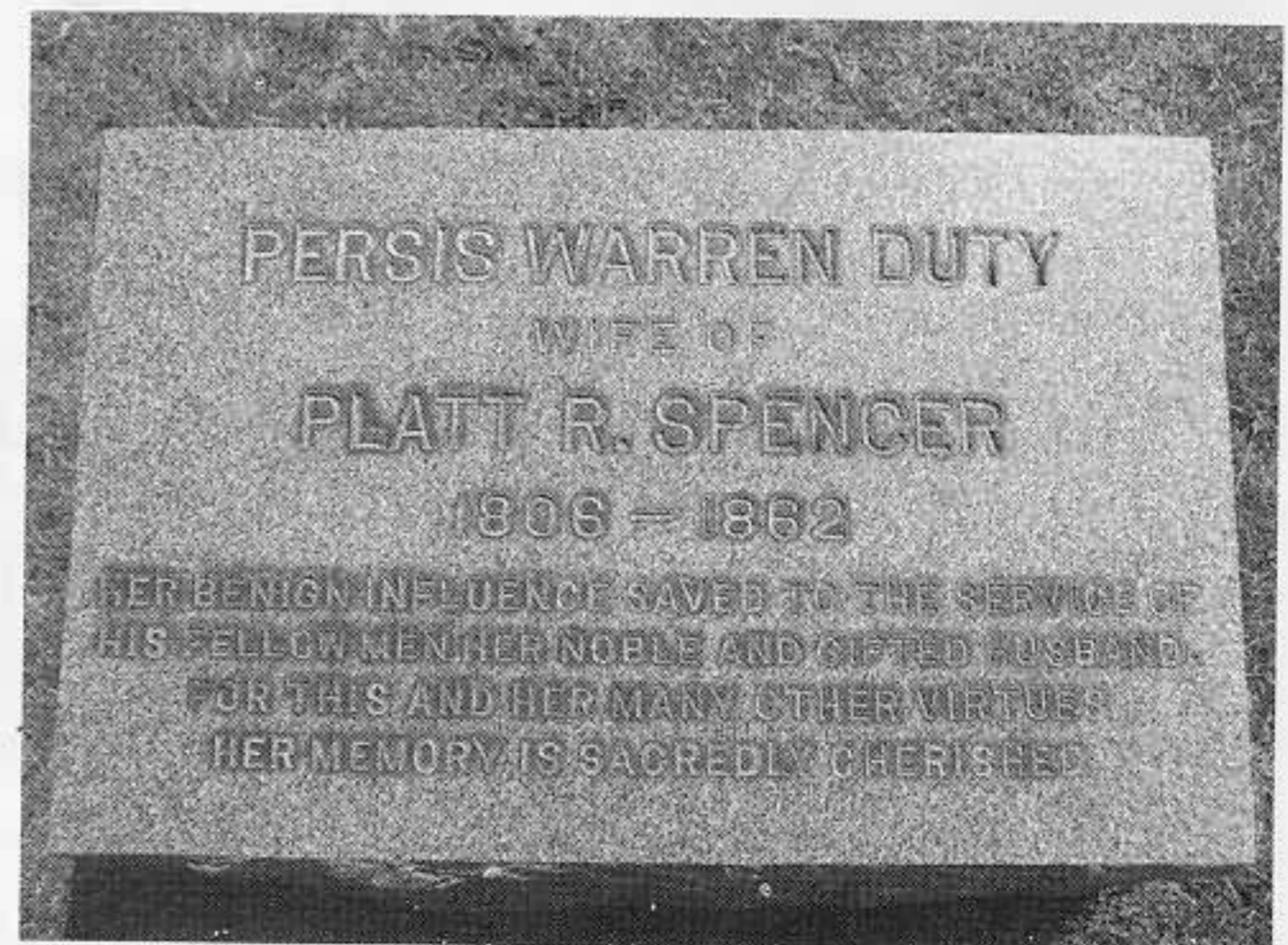
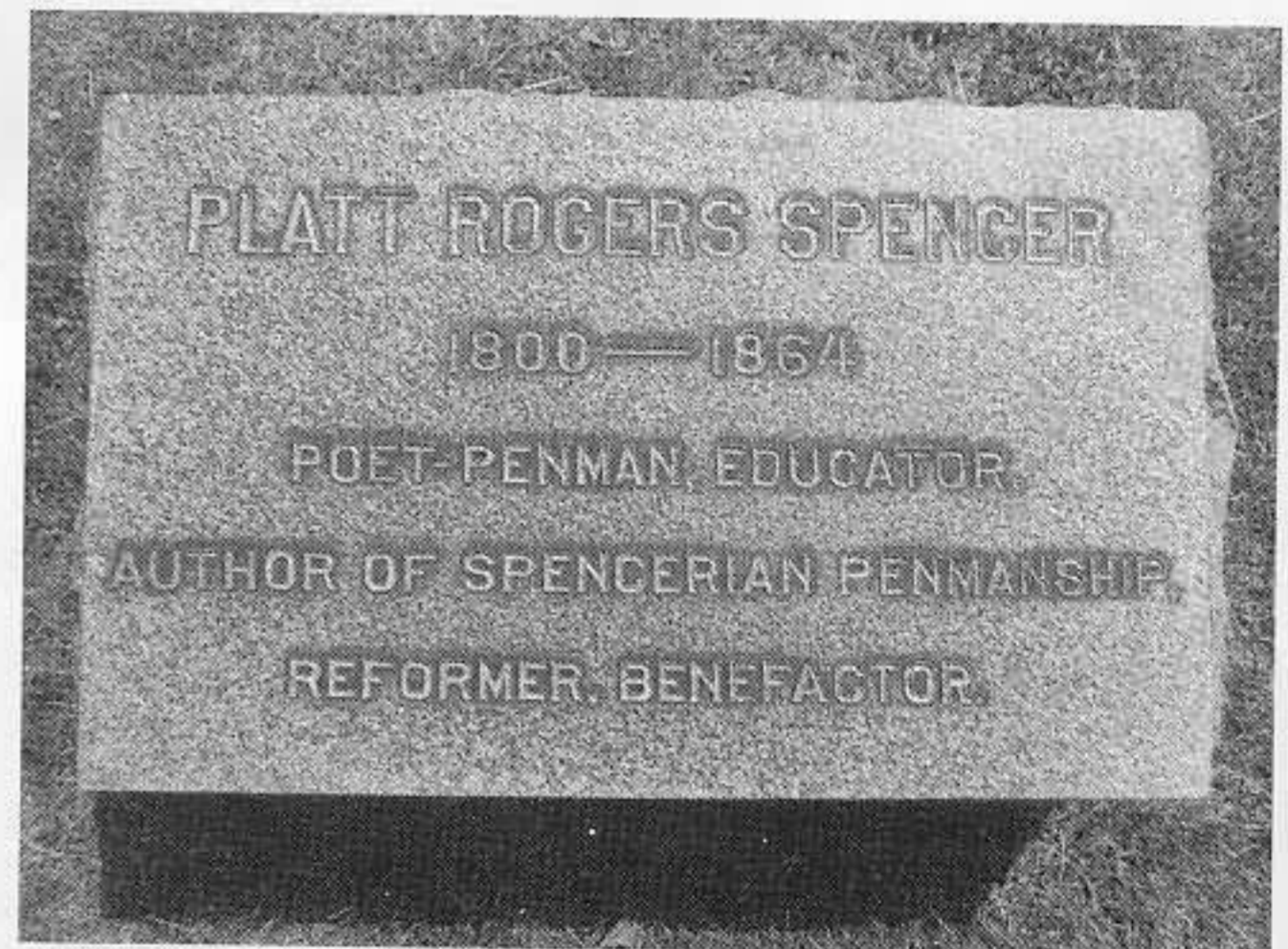
Bottom: Photograph of a picture postcard, 1903, shows that the Spencer monument used to be covered with ivy. Plants also surround the monument and a potted urn stands in the foreground.

Postcard courtesy of Betty Layport, photograph by Ron Berg, Vedros Studio

Mr. Spencer's stone. It is not known who donated the grave-stone for Persis although credit for her stone is popularly given to Robert. The inscriptions on these monuments read:

PERSIS WARREN DUTY  
WIFE OF  
PLATT ROGERS SPENCER  
1806—1862  
HER BENIGN INFLUENCE  
SAVED TO THE SERVICE OF  
HIS FELLOW MEN HER  
NOBLE AND GIFTED HUSBAND  
FOR THIS AND HER  
MANY OTHER VIRTUES  
HER MEMORY IS SACREDLY CHERISHED

PLATT ROGERS SPENCER  
1800—1864  
POET, PENMAN, EDUCATOR  
AUTHOR OF SPENCERIAN PENMANSHIP  
REFORMER, BENEFACTOR  
ERECTED BY HIS GRATEFUL PUPIL,  
MAHLON J. WOODRUFF,  
NEW YORK CITY  
BY PERMISSION



— FIGURE 64 —

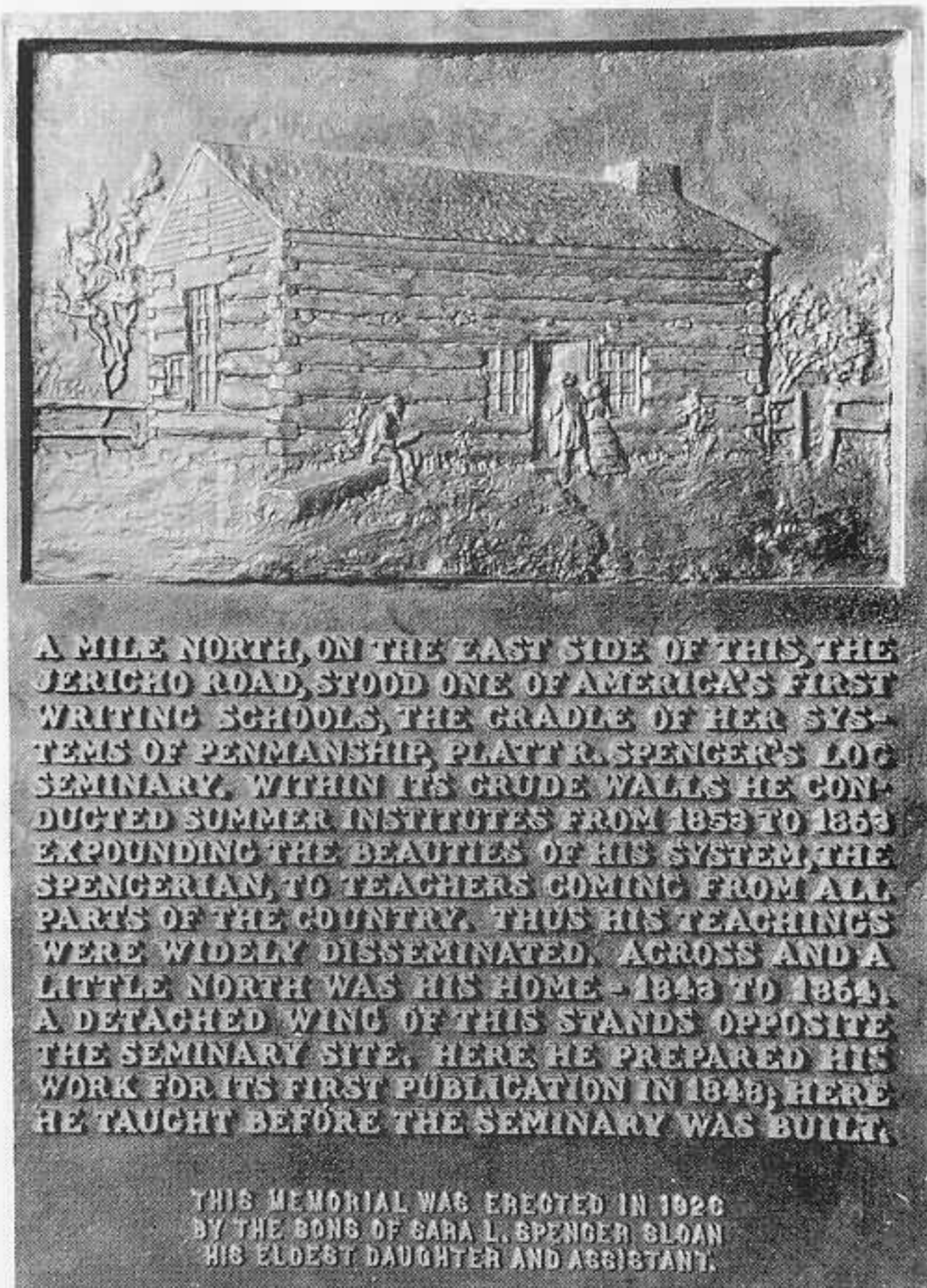
Spencer's beloved Jericho log seminary is remembered, as well, by a bold granite memorial. It consists of a large boulder with a bronze tablet mounted thereon, and is located on the northeast corner of Meyers Road (formerly Jericho Road) and Route 20, near Geneva, Ohio. The tablet reads:





A MILE NORTH, ON THE EAST SIDE OF THIS, THE JERICHO ROAD, STOOD ONE OF AMERICA'S FIRST WRITING SCHOOLS, THE CRADLE OF HER SYSTEMS OF PENMANSHIP, PLATT R. SPENCER'S LOG SEMINARY. WITHIN IT'S CRUDE WALLS HE CONDUCTED SUMMER INSTITUTES FROM 1853 TO 1863 EXPOUNDING THE BEAUTIES OF HIS SYSTEM, THE SPENCERIAN, TO TEACHERS COMING FROM ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. THUS HIS TEACHINGS WERE WIDELY DISSEMINATED. ACROSS AND A LITTLE NORTH WAS HIS HOME—1843 TO 1864. A DETACHED WING OF THIS STANDS OPPOSITE THE SEMINARY SITE. HERE, HE PREPARED HIS WORK FOR ITS FIRST PUBLICATION IN 1848; HERE HE TAUGHT BEFORE THE SEMINARY WAS BUILT

THIS MEMORIAL WAS ERECTED IN 1926 BY THE SONS OF SARA L. SPENCER SLOAN HIS ELDEST DAUGHTER AND ASSISTANT.





## PLATT ROGERS SPENCER'S PUBLICATIONS

During his lifetime, Platt Rogers Spencer published a number of books on penmanship. These were:

1848. "Spencer & Rice's System of Business and Ladies' Penmanship," a graded set of copy slips, with accompanying rules and explanations. These were later published under the title, "Spencerian or Semi-Angular Penmanship."
1855. "Spencerian System of Writing," in a series of 13 copy books. Also, "Theoretical Guide to Spencerian or Semi-Angular Penmanship."
1857. "Spencerian System of Penmanship," for Academies and Public Schools, in 6 numbers of copy books. Also,

"Compendium of Spencerian or Semi-Angular Penmanship," copyrighted by P. R. Spencer & Sons, containing 65 plates of Penmanship engraved facsimile from the author's writing, with instructions. Also, a chart, entitled "Correct Spencerian Position of Hand and Pen, with Explanations."

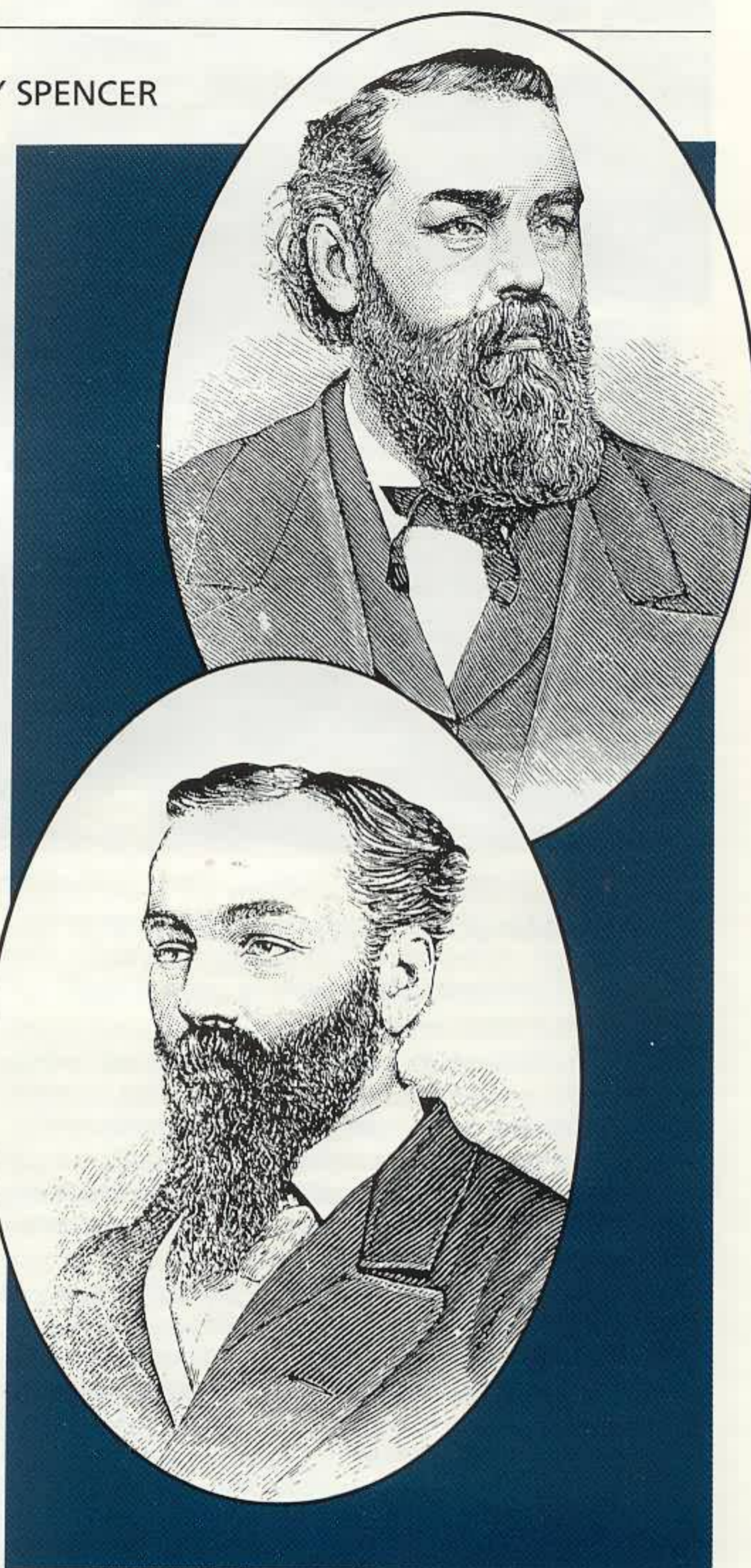
- 1858-59. "Spencerian System of Practical Penmanship," in a series of 8 progressive copy books. Instructions on covers; freehand copies. A handsome, practical series.
- 1860-61-62-63. "Revised Spencerian System of Practical Semi-Angular Penmanship." Common School Series, 5 numbers: Business Series, 2 numbers; Ladies' Series, 2 numbers; Exercise Series, 2 numbers.

## CHILDREN OF PLATT ROGERS AND PERSIS DUTY SPENCER

After his death, Spencer's children continued their father's work in various parts of the country. Some established schools of their own, and therefore helped to create new generations of penmen, whose techniques may have surpassed their founders', but whose indebtedness to his perseverance and skill was surely known. Of the children who survived into the twentieth century, Ellen pursued her own career and made a significant contribution in the field of Law, where she was a champion for the rights of women. Three of the Spencer progeny did not live to adulthood. These were: Henry Harvey Spencer, born June 11, 1831, who died at age three months; Julia Mandana Spencer, born June 14, 1846, who died at the age of two years, and Emma Louisa Spencer, born April 15, 1856 who died in 1864, within months of her father's death, at the age of eight-and-a-half years. Another daughter, Phebe Jerusha Spencer, was born on November 11, 1842, and lived to early adulthood, marrying a Mr. Adams, it is believed, several years after her father's death. Remarks made in the article about Junius Sloan in *Art In America* (Summer, 1952) indicate that Phebe died prior to 1880, although the date is not listed. The remaining seven children all lived to maturity, and the following biographical information on them has been derived, for the most part, from the *History of Ashtabula County* (1898) and *Art In America* (Summer, 1952):

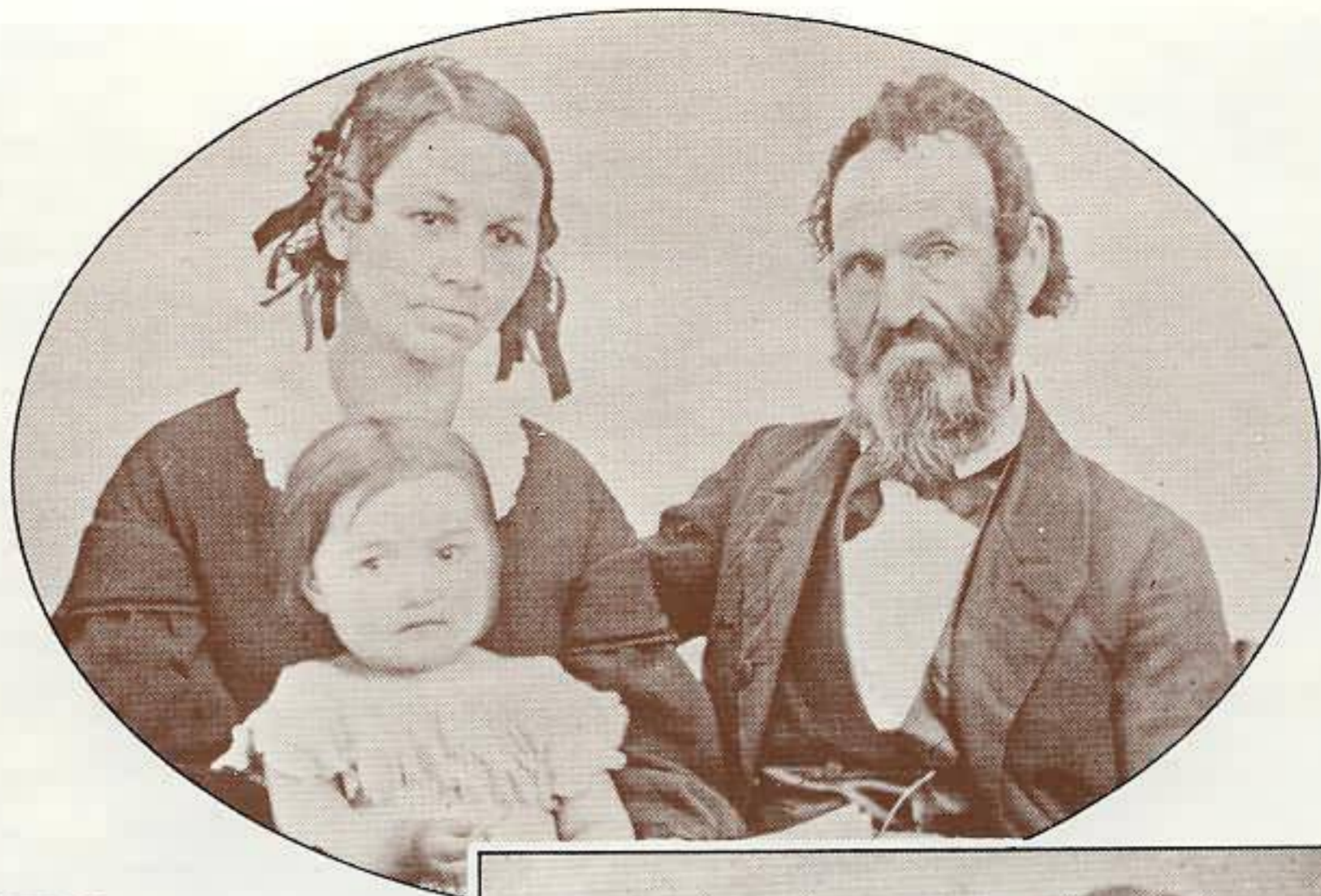
### HENRY CALEB AND HARVEY ALDEN SPENCER,

twin sons of Platt R. Spencer, were born in Geneva, Ohio, February 6, 1838. During infancy, childhood, and early manhood they bore such close resemblance to each other that even their own mother was often puzzled to distinguish between them. Their identity was the more difficult to establish from their roguish unwillingness during childhood to tell their names. When they were old enough to accompany young ladies to social gatherings, it was not unusual for one to escort home the young lady the other had called for, and spend an hour in the family circle without the slightest suspicion of the exchange on the part of the young ladies or their friends.



Top, Henry Caleb Spencer. Bottom, Harvey Alden Spencer: *History of Ashtabula County, Ohio, 1798-1878*, William Bros., publishers, Philadelphia.





Top left: Platt Rogers Spencer; portrait by Junius Sloan, 1860, courtesy Valparaiso Univ. Museum of Art

Top right: Platt and Persis Spencer with daughter Phebe, 1846, courtesy the Newberry Library

Bottom left: Persis Duty Spencer; portrait by Junius Sloan, 1860, courtesy Valparaiso Univ. Museum of Art

Bottom right: Platt Spencer with son Lyman, 1853, courtesy the Newberry Library.

After the marriage of the brothers the continued resemblance caused laughable mistakes even on the part of their wives, each of whom was confident of the superiority of her choice, and wondered that people in general could not observe the marked difference.

Persons who had met one of the brothers would invariably claim the acquaintance of the other; so that for many years their friends and reputations were common property. The pictures preceding this sketch show that after a separation of twelve years, living in different climates and under different conditions, the resemblance has not been maintained.

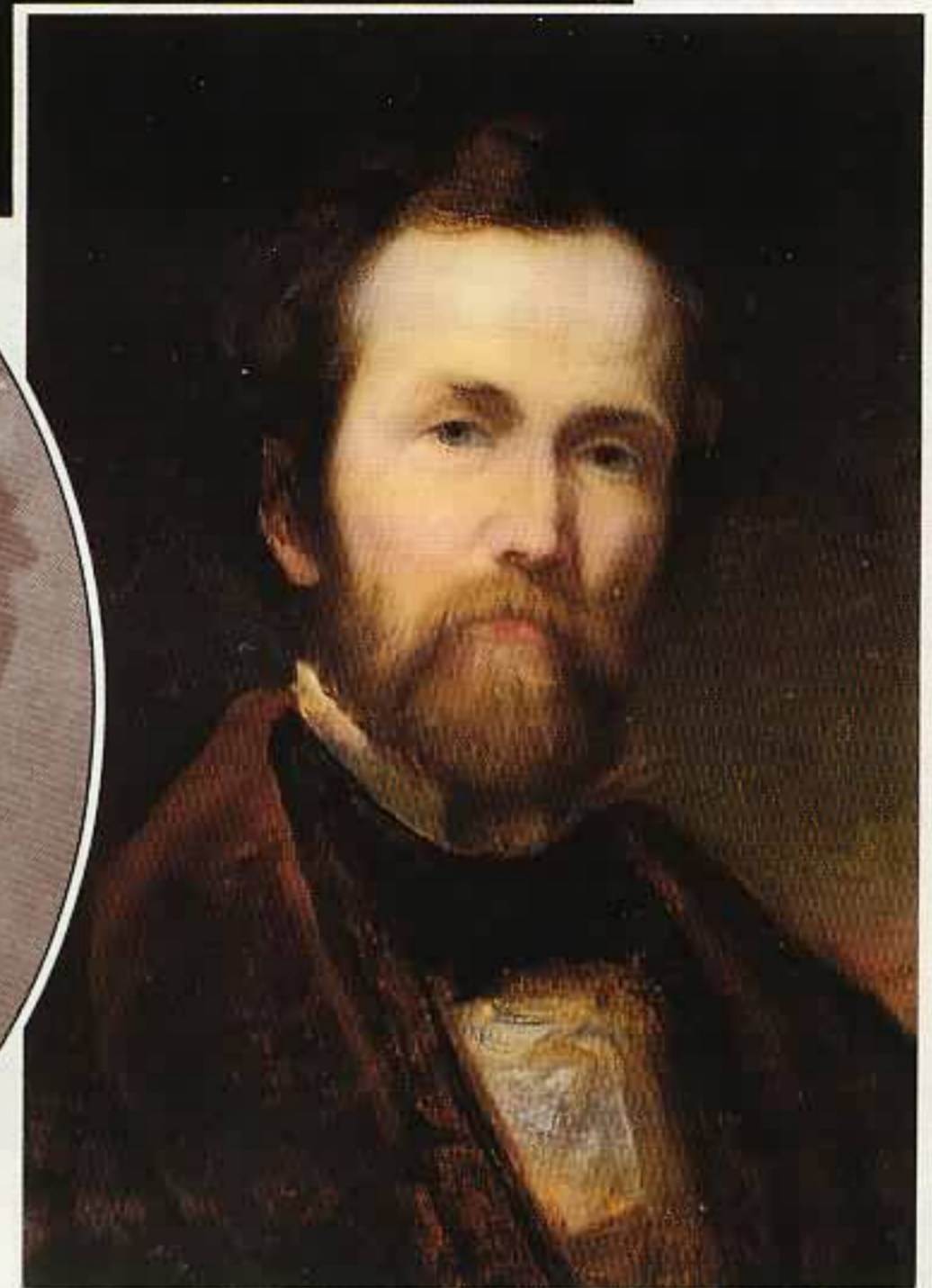
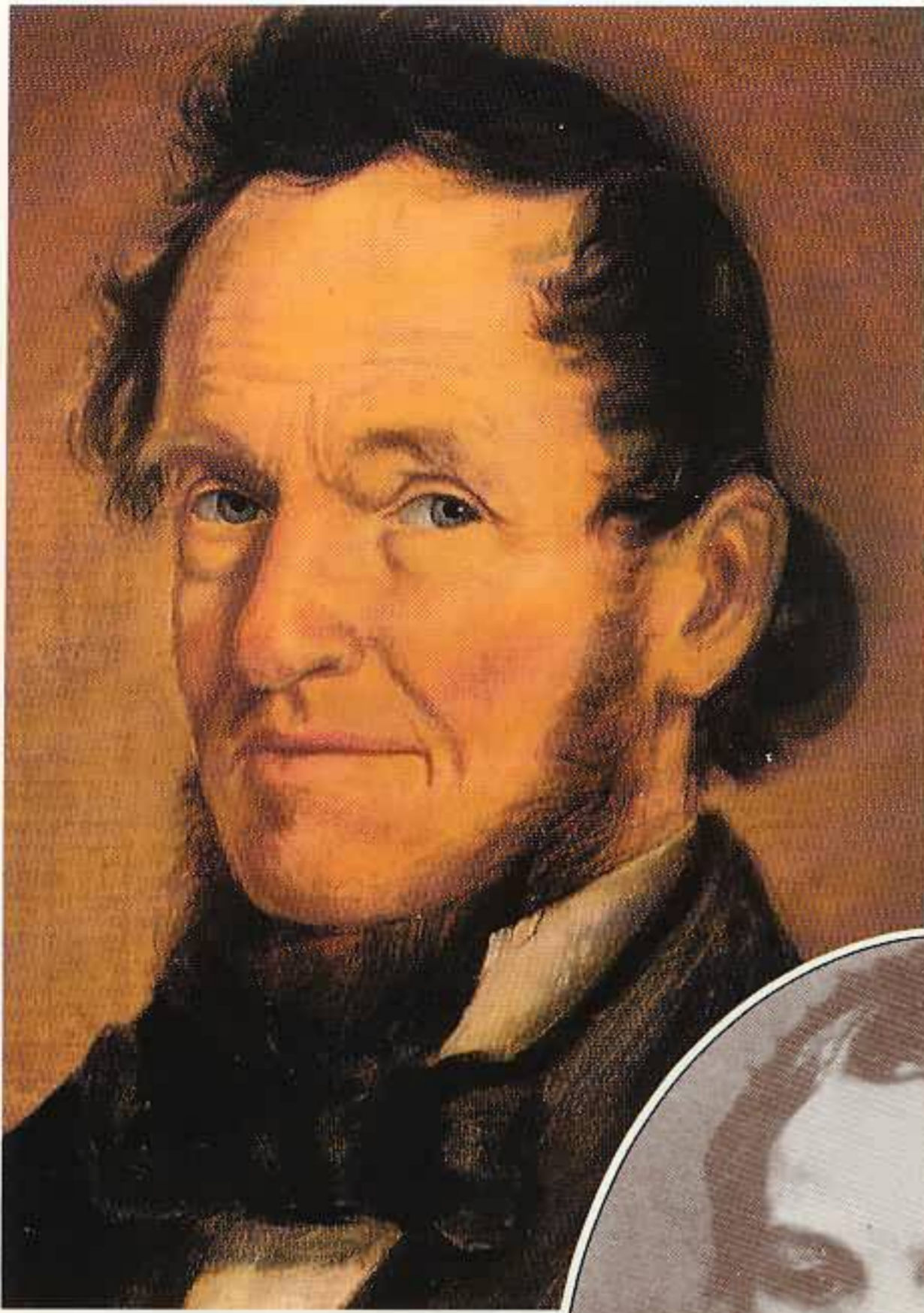
In childhood the "twins" were in constant companionship. They attended district and select schools, Hiram Eclectic institute, and the business college, manifesting early the family talent for writing and teaching. During their minority they taught writing schools together and separately in East Ashtabula, at Ashtabula Harbor, Saybrook, Geneva, Jefferson, Madison, Hiram, and elsewhere. Their father gave each of his sons and daughters practical training as teachers by making them assistants in his numerous schools and classes.

Here it is proper that the twins be noted separately.

**HENRY C. SPENCER**, at twelve years of age, was regarded by his father and other competent judges the best penman of his age in the country. He assisted his father in many of his writing schools, and in the public schools of Buffalo and Sandusky. In 1858 he taught in the Bryant & Stratton Cleveland business college, the first of the celebrated chain of colleges, and, being then nineteen years of age, was offered a partnership. Having other plans in reference to Spencerian, he did not accept.

In 1859 he was in charge of penmanship in the public schools of Buffalo and in the Buffalo business college. Subsequently, when the Spencerian copy books were published for general use, he introduced them and systematized instruction in penmanship in the public schools of many cities and towns east and west. Among them were Rochester, Syracuse, and Oswego, in New York; Detroit and Ypsilanti, in Michigan; Richmond and Fort Wayne, in Indiana; Madison, Wisconsin; and St. Louis, Missouri. He was called the "Prince of Blackboard Writers," and in this respect never found a successful competitor.





Top left: Platt Rogers Spencer, 1849  
Courtesy of the Valparaiso University  
Museum of Art.

Top right: Sarah Spencer Sloan, por-  
trait by Junius Sloan, 1855, courtesy  
Valparaiso University Museum of Art  
Bottom left: Persis Duty Spencer,  
1850, courtesy the Newberry Library  
Bottom right: Junius Sloan, self  
portrait, 1854, courtesy Valparaiso  
University Museum of Art

In 1861 he located in New York city, teaching in the various institutions of the great metropolis and adjacent towns, introducing and firmly establishing the Spencerian system, and aiding in founding the Brooklyn business college. He also taught in the Bryant & Stratton New York business college.

In 1863 his father and himself had together prepared copies for engraving for new copy books, and upon submitting them to Mr. Jas. W. Lusk, that he might select the most perfect, he selected for one book, from Henry's writing, twenty-two out of twenty-four of the written copies, and for another all of Henry's copies were chosen. His father was proud of the result.

In 1864 he was appointed superintendent of penmanship in the Bryant & Stratton chain of business colleges, comprising forty institutions located in the most important cities of the country. In December, 1864, he married, in Poughkeepsie, New York, Miss Sara J. Andrews, a talented and estimable lady, whose acquaintance he had formed in St. Louis. They have two promising boys.

In 1865 he had main charge of the revision of the Spencerian publications.

In 1866 he located in Washington, District of Columbia, where, for more than twelve years, he has successfully conducted the Spencerian business college, of which he is principal and proprietor.

As a penman his reputation and acquaintance is co-extensive with our country. He has instructed personally more than fifty thousand persons within twenty years, and has trained many teachers for the profession. His penmanship, on large specimens, may be found upon the walls of business colleges in all parts of the country.

Henry enjoys the confidence, respect, and fellowship of the best citizens of Washington, and may be counted an honored representative of Ashtabula County at the national capital.

**HARVEY A. SPENCER** is a fine penman and an experienced commercial teacher. From 1864 to 1866 he was engaged as a teacher in the business colleges of Providence,



Rhode Island and Boston, Massachusetts.

He married, in 1866, a Boston lady, one of his pupils . . . .

Mr. Spencer was for several years superintendent of writing in the public schools of St. Louis, and later occupied the same position in the public schools of New Orleans. He has travelled extensively through the South, teaching in the principal cities and towns . . . .

It is noted that in the 1870s Harvey A. Spencer lived in Dallas, Texas, where he became the business manager for the Commonwealth Business College of Dallas. While in Dallas, he also became a dealer in Texas State lands.

He later moved to New York City, eventually serving as director of the Spencerian Business College in that locality.

#### LYMAN POTTER SPENCER,

youngest son of Platt R. Spencer, was born May 11, 1840. He early manifested a talent for drawing, inherited from his father. At the age of ten years he would draw striking likenesses, with pen or pencil, of those who sat for him, and he also sketched readily and faithfully from nature. At the age of thirteen he designed and executed with pen the index page of Township Maps of Ashtabula County. This piece of work, remarkable for a boy, consists chiefly of appropriate lettering, pen portraits of Mr. Giddings and Mr. Wade, and may be seen in the office of the county auditor at Jefferson. Lyman was a faithful student in the district schools, attended Hiram Eclectic Institute and Oberlin college. In September, 1862, Lyman was one of the Ohio "Squirrel Hunters," specially called out to protect the State from invasion. In June, 1863, he enlisted as a private in the Second Regiment, Ohio heavy artillery. He was made quartermaster-sergeant of the regiment, and subsequently promoted to second lieutenant, and acted as aide-de-camp on staff of Colonel H. G. Gibson. He was on duty with his regiment to the end of the war. He was engaged in actions in Cleveland, Tennessee, and Decatur, Alabama, and in the celebrated battle of Nashville. He committed many interesting views, and curious and amusing incidents of camp and army life to the pages of his sketch book.

Since the close of the war, with the exception of two years in the State department at Washington, Lyman has been employed chiefly upon the publications of Spencerian penmanship, his skill in designing and producing work for the engraver being considered as eminently adapted to that work. Those who visited the Centennial Exhibition may have seen the remarkable display of Spencerian penmanship by the Spencer brothers. Prominent in the collection was a mammoth piece, the "Declaration of Independence," designed and chiefly executed by Lyman. It is without doubt the most artistic finished specimen of pen work in the world. It is valued at five thousand dollars. With the soul of an artist, Lyman Spencer has studied and practiced art from boyhood, and produced many gems. Some of his fine vignettes and beautiful ornamental designs and many specimens of his matchless writing have been rendered imperishable by the engraver, and multiplied in almost countless numbers by the press.

In 1863, Mr. Lyman Spencer, the subject of this sketch, married Fidelia Bartholomew, daughter of Calvin Bartholomew, Esq., of Geneva, Ohio. She is a devoted wife

Top, Lyman Potter Spencer. Center, Platt R. Spencer, Jr., Bottom, Robert Closson Spencer: *History of Ashtabula County, Ohio, 1798-1878*, William Bros., publishers, Philadelphia.





and mother. They have four children,—two sons and two daughters, and reside in Washington, D.C.

In 1879, under Lyman's supervision, the Spencer brothers published the *New Spencerian Compendium of Penmanship* and dedicated it in loving memory to their father. Lyman's penmanship, and also that of his colleague, Henry Flickinger,\* was selected for the exemplar models of this great work. At its time, this publication was considered the most extensive treatise of American ornamental handwriting and lettering art in existence.

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#### PLATT R. SPENCER, JR.

Quoting again from the *History of Ashtabula County* (1898):

*Platt R. Spencer, Jr., third son and namesake of his father, was born May 3, 1835, in Geneva, Ohio. At three years of age he entered school at Jefferson, where his parents were temporarily residing. Their return to Geneva two years later secured to him the advantages of the "old red school-house," near the homestead, and the healthful exercise incident to farm life. When eight years of age he entered the academy at Jefferson, his father being engaged, incidentally to his duties as county treasurer, in teaching writing in the ball-room of the Jefferson House. The youthful Platt was one of his most zealous pupils, and it soon became evident that the peculiar gifts of the father were inherent in the son. When he had attained the age of twelve years the fame of "Spencer's Log Seminary" was attracting pupils from all parts of the land, and Platt junior was relegated from the position of learner to that of assistant teacher. He labored successfully in this capacity, with intervals of work upon the farm, until fifteen years of age, when he opened his first school in East Ashtabula, followed by others in neighboring towns. A year later we find him at Hiram college, zealously pursuing his studies and defraying his expenses by teaching writing. The same system of labor and study was maintained subsequently at Kingsville Academy. In the spring of 1856 he entered Bryant & Stratton's college at Cleveland, and completed the business course during the following year, having charge of the writing department during the time. He then went to Pittsburgh as instructor in the Iron City college. The next year he became connected with the Bryant & Stratton college of Chicago, where he remained several years. In 1860 he assumed a similar position in the Bryant & Stratton college of Philadelphia. In December of this year Mr. Spencer married Mary Duty, of Cleveland, a lady of fine culture, a daughter of one of the pioneer residents of that city, and began his married life in Philadelphia. They have, living, four interesting children. A little later the certainties of civil war began to divert the energies of the youth of America from the peaceful pursuits of learning to the sterner duties of the camp and field. Mr. Spencer therefore turned his attention to a new field of labor and secured the position of teacher of writing in the public schools of Cleveland, which office he discharged for two years with great credit to himself and profit to the city. In 1863, Mr. Spencer became resident principal and half-owner of the Bryant & Stratton college of Indianapolis, and conducted a very successful business. While*

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\*Louis Madarasz, the man who, historically, is credited as being the greatest penman who ever lived, expressed his opinion in 1909 that Henry Flickinger was the greatest penman of the nineteenth century.

*in Indianapolis Mr. Spencer was baptized and confirmed in Christ Church, of the Episcopal denomination, of which he is still an active member. In 1865, Mr. Spencer established the Spencerian Institute of Penmanship at Geneva, Ohio. The great advantages of the school, aided by the historic associations of the town as being the place where the illustrious author of the "Spencerian" had lived and labored, drew hither as pupils a great number of ladies and gentlemen from all parts of the Union. Mr. Spencer here enjoyed the privilege of residing at the "old homestead," amid the cherished associations of his boyhood; but his duties became too burdensome, and the institute was removed to Cleveland and incorporated with the Union (old Bryant & Stratton) college. In 1877 he became sole owner of this college, and later changed its name to "Spencerian Business College." This college, under other names, has for twenty-six years occupied a leading position among schools of its kind; but under Mr. Spencer's intelligent management, aided by a large corps of teachers of wide experience and ability, and in the closest sympathy with his plans and principles, the college has attained a popularity hitherto unknown.*

*In Mr. Spencer's peculiar department, his reputation as penman and teacher is second only to that of his father, and undoubtedly a greater number of the best penmen of the United States owe their proficiency to his instruction than to any other living teacher. But it is not alone in his skill with the pen that Mr. Spencer seems most worthily to bear his father's name. The same close sympathy that existed between the father's pupils and himself seems to be a marked feature of the son's work as teacher. Mr. Spencer not only takes a genuine, practical interest in the welfare of all his pupils, but strives to imbue them with his own high sense of honor and refinement of taste and character. This has proved very helpful and elevating to his pupils generally, but especially to the young when at the formative period of character.*

---

#### ROBERT CLOSSON SPENCER,

*son of Platt Rogers and Persis Duty Spencer, the oldest of eleven children,—six sons and five daughters,—was born June 22, 1829, in the village of East Ashtabula, Ashtabula County, Ohio; removed in infancy with his parents to Geneva, in the same county, where he grew to manhood, attended the district schools, worked on the farm, with several terms at Jefferson and Kingsville academies; graduated at Gundry's Mercantile college, Cincinnati, in 1851; soon after joined Hon. Victor M. Rice in a commercial school at Buffalo, New York; then united with Bryant, Stratton & Co. in organizing and extending their chain of commercial colleges, having charge successively of schools at Buffalo, Chicago, St. Louis, and at Milwaukee, where he went in 1863, and has established his permanent residence.*

*At the outbreak of the war of secession he was in the St. Louis college, but joined the Union army under General Nathaniel Lyon. On his return to the St. Louis college, he found the sentiment in the school strongly disloyal. Confederate flags were raised by students over their desks without objection from teachers. Mr. Spencer announced that the college would live or die under the Stars and Stripes, and at once proceeded to gather and destroy all emblems of secession that were displayed in the institution. This act drove away nearly all the students and made enemies of the*



secessionists in the community, but enlisted the warm sympathy and support of Unionists, and the college soon began to prosper more than ever before.

In 1865, Mr. Spencer led a reformatory movement in business colleges that separated him from Bryant & Stratton and some of his old professional associates and co-laborers. The movement caused a somewhat heated and bitter conflict, but resulted successfully in the formation of the International Business College Association upon a basis that enlisted Mr. Spencer's hearty co-operation, in which he served two years as corresponding secretary and member of the executive board; was then elected president, and in his annual address to the association outlined what was pronounced the most comprehensive, practical, and elevated view of the scope, functions, and future of business education and business colleges that had ever been presented. It was the opinion that the ground mapped out and the work indicated in that address comprehended all that could be accomplished in the next half-century.

In the field of business education Mr. Spencer's influence and views are widely felt, and are distinguished for their solid merit and elevated character. Although his best energies are devoted to his college in Milwaukee, in the education and training of young men for business, he is at the same time an ardent and active friend of public schools, advocating and leading the most liberal and progressive measures on that subject. Through his instrumentality organizations have been formed in Milwaukee around the public schools of the city "to promote public education, encourage culture, develop social life, and foster general improvement in the interest of all the people." In the board of school commissioners of Milwaukee he has done much for the improvement of the public schools and the development of the school system. Although it was thought that he could have been elected, he declined to allow his name to be used as a candidate for the office of mayor of Milwaukee. The known liberality of his views induced the Socialist party of Wisconsin to seek Mr. Spencer as their standard-bearer for governor of the State, which he peremptorily declined, on the ground that he was opposed to some of their views and tendencies regarding property, etc. The independence of his political and religious opinions disincline him to the restraints of public office, and attract him toward reform movements, in which he is moderate and judicious though firm and resolute.

The National Liberal League, having for its platform of principles "the total separation of religion and the state," "national protection to national citizens in their equal religious, civil, and political rights," and "universal education as the basis of universal suffrage in this free republic," appointed Mr. Spencer on its national executive board and head of the organization in Wisconsin.

To these measures he lends his influence with characteristic liberality and energy.

Mr. Spencer has been twice married. May 15, 1853, he united in marriage with Miss Sarah Elizabeth Beach, second daughter of William and Susan Roop Beach, Erie county, New York, a lady of rare talents, refinement, and beauty of character, whose acquaintance he formed in Buffalo, where she was known as a most accomplished teacher. She died in 1856, leaving an infant son, Junius.

June 22, 1863, he married Mrs. Ellen Whiton King, widow of Chancy P. King, a lawyer of Janesville, Wisconsin, daughter of Hon. Daniel G. Whiton, and niece of Edward V. Whiton,

first chief-justice of Wisconsin. By this marriage there are seven children, Robert C., Jr., Edward W., Henry K., Anna E., Charles L., George S., and Earnest D.

The residence of Mr. Spencer in Milwaukee, on Prospect Avenue, is by the shore of Lake Michigan, looking out upon Milwaukee Bay, a most delightful spot, not unlike the haunts of his boyhood, the shore of Lake Erie, at Geneva.

The Spencerian business college at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, of which Mr. Spencer is founder and proprietor, holds the highest rank, and is widely and favorably known for its thoroughness and success in educating and training young men for business life.

During the past twenty-five years Mr. Spencer has instructed thousands, who are well represented among the best businessmen of our own and other countries. As a business educator he makes a deep impression upon the minds and character of his students, inspiring the best spirit and giving safe direction to their ambition and energies.

#### SARA LOUISA SPENCER

Born on December 17, 1832, Sara was the eldest daughter and in the 1850's became her father's teaching assistant at Jericho. She also taught in the first Spencerian College and aided Platt Rogers Spencer in his commercial ventures prior to his death. She was superbly skilled in penmanship and was considered the finest penwoman of her day. Quoting from *Art In America* (Summer, 1952):

*She had taught her father's system even before her brothers, serving as her father's assistant in Pittsburgh, teaching under his direction in Chamberlin's Commercial College in 1852, and again, later, in Cleveland; and she taught through much of her married life . . . . She served in a way as her father's secretary during much of the latter part of his life, and she considered that she thus had a particularly close and intimate understanding of his principles, and she felt that she had important insights about the system which had been overlooked by her brothers.*

Sara's opinion about there being aspects of Spencerian Script that yet needed to be explained and taught, coupled with her dissatisfaction that the widespread credit for the continuance of her father's work was given solely to her brothers, caused her to develop an idea to write a new instruction manual. In this venture she enlisted the support of her younger sister, Ellen. Sara's intention was, as expressed in *Art In America*, to:

*. . . publish a modification of the Spencerian penmanship . . . The new hand was to be more 'feminine,' . . . and was to stimulate interest in penmanship at a time when it was suffering from the development of the typewriter . . . . The plan and its motivations are expressed in the dummy for a copybook . . . entitled, 'The American Anglo-Gothic Series of Copy Books. Arranged and Written by the Daughters of P.R. Spencer, Author and Master of the American Semi-Angular System of Penmanship.' Sara and Ellen are given as the authors, and it is dedicated to their mother and their three deceased sisters; that is, the father and all the women of the family appear by name on the title page. Alternate names are given on succeeding pages of the dummy: The Columbian Gothic; The Gothic Spencerian; The American Gothic; and The Spencerian Gothic.*

Sara went east in the later eighties for what she thought



was to be the final working out of the new system and completion of plans for publication, but nothing came of this . . . . She felt that the brothers unjustly held back their support, which in a way did not surprise her; but harder to bear was the feeling that Ellen did not devote herself wholeheartedly to the venture, but in the end lightly put it aside in pursuit of her own interests.

Sara's proposed manual was never published, and, disappointed, she continued to teach on her own.

In June, 1858, Sara married Junius Sloan,\* an itinerant artist of some reknown at the time in Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. For forty-two years she taught penmanship while travelling with her husband as his life-long partner until his death in 1900. Twenty-three years later, Sara Spencer Sloan died at the age of ninety-one.

### PERSIS ELLEN SPENCER

Persis Ellen Spencer, referred to by her family as Ellen, was born May 3, 1850. In 1862, at age twelve, she, too, began teaching with her father at Jericho, but when he died in 1864, she moved to Poughkeepsie, New York to live with her brother, Henry. The next year, when Henry moved back to Ohio to direct the revision of the Spencerian publications, Ellen went with him. She began teaching, once again, at the log seminary, and also at Painesville, Ohio and the Rockford Seminary in Rockford, Ohio. In 1867, Ellen moved to South Bend, Indiana, to live with her sister, Mrs. Phebe Spencer Adams. There she entered the business college conducted by Mr. Adams. At this institution, the professor of business law invited her to enter his class; a novel honor for a woman at that time. During the next few years, Ellen developed a keen interest in the study of law and, especially, the civil rights of women.

Upon her graduation, Ellen Spencer moved to Washington, D.C. to assume her new position as head of the new "ladies department" of the Spencerian Business College, of which her brother, Henry, was the principal. An increasing number of women were applying as students due to the influence of General Spinner, who at that time was the United States Treasurer. Against much opposition, he had begun to employ women in his department, and sent many of his female employees to the ladies department of the Spencerian Business College to learn penmanship and book-keeping. Typewriting was unknown at that time, and since many of the early Federal Government employees were Civil War widows, there was an abundance of women seeking jobs. In an article from the Washington Post dated October 12, 1929, it is noted:

*Young Miss Spencer found time after office hours to engage in the social life of the National Capitol. Pretty and attractive, she met many officials and men of distinction. This acquaintanceship stood her in good stead afterward, when she became a woman leader and lawyer. In those early days she attended all gatherings of progressive women. One of her treasured recollections is a meeting at Lincoln Hall . . . of*

\*It was he, Junius Sloan, who painted the only portraits known of Platt and Persis Spencer, his own wife—Sara Spencer Sloan—and the young Emma Spencer. Junius painted many landscapes as well, and also rendered the painting of the Spencer homestead. Junius Sloan was a close personal friend of Platt R. Spencer's eldest son, Robert Spencer.



Top, Sara Louisa Spencer,  
Bottom, Persis Ellen Spencer.

*the American Woman Suffrage Association, which was presided over by Susan B. Anthony. Her dreams of freedom for women were crystallized by the sight on that platform of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott and Phoebe Cousins. As an important pioneer in the field of business education for women, Ellen Spencer had a seat on the platform, too . . . .*

In June 14, 1871, Ellen married General R.D. Mussey, who had achieved fame in the Civil War. (Prior to the conflict, he had been a reputable lawyer.) He is described as . . . "a man of commanding presence, six feet in height and more, with a leonine head, crowned with a mass of golden hair." Quoting from the Washington Post article about Ellen Spencer Mussey:

*True to her idea of the quality of women, Miss Spencer, with the full consent of the bridegroom, omitted from the wedding rite the word "obey." . . .*



General Mussey was a personal friend of Rutherford B. Hayes, and a member of the same Literary Club in Cincinnati, so the General and his wife had the freedom of the White House during his administration as well as during the Grant and Garfield regimes. General Mussey was a leading Republican and Mrs. Mussey aided him in presidential campaigns.

In 1876, while campaigning for Rutherford B. Hayes, General Mussey took malarial fever and from its effects became a semi-invalid. His young wife . . . marshaled herself . . . to meet the emergency. She moved down near the courthouse, arranged a room for her husband on the office floor and proceeded to interview his law clients. Now Mrs. Mussey's business education stood her in good stead. When she was unable to cope with a case, she hurried back to consult with her lawyer husband. The members of the bar gallantly did their best to assist the wife of a lawyer making such a brave fight. . . .

General Mussey . . . recognized her right and ability for a career on her own, and insisted on her becoming his partner when he was able to resume his law practice. She read law constantly under the tuition of this able lawyer and kept in constant practice.

Soon Mrs. Mussey prepared most of the cases her husband was to argue and was especially successful in congressional work, which gave her the skill she has had in getting congressional legislation passed. After the death of General Mussey in 1892, the young widow determined to carry on. A committee . . . was appointed to examine Ellen Spencer Mussey for her fitness to practice law before the Washington bar. She was admitted in 1893 when she was 42 years old. Mrs. Mussey felt that her admission as a bona fide member of the bar was a triumph for women, although she was not the first woman admitted. She had tried for admission

as a law student at the George Washington University and had been refused permission to register because of being a woman . . . In September, 1896, Mrs. Mussey was one of the first women admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Mrs. Mussey took a course in the summer school of law in 1896 in Cornell University, being the only woman in quite a large class. But the condition of women who wished to enter the profession of law in Washington was a difficult one. No school would accept them as students.

For that reason, Mrs. Mussey was forced, through her sympathy for women who wished to follow in her footsteps, to establish a class in law for women. In 1898, Mrs. Mussey, as dean of the law school, handed diplomas to six women, the first class of women lawyers to be graduated anywhere in the world.

From the time of her law school's first graduation in 1898, Ellen worked continuously and tirelessly for the rights of women. Her fame spread nationwide, and after his election as President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt requested she come to the White House so that he could meet her.

As the years went by, Mrs. Mussey devoted herself to many issues of national and local concern, becoming involved in countless committees and campaigns. She was a prominent figure in Washington, D.C. in the fight for women to have the right to vote, and she was proud to tell the colleagues she worked with that her famous father also had strongly believed in women's suffrage. For her life-long crusade to recognize the rights of women and her contribution to the legal profession, Ellen Spencer Mussey's own College of Law conferred upon her the degree of Doctor of Laws in 1927; she was 77 years old. Mrs. Mussey lived into her eighties, a vibrant woman, respected by all who knew her.

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## THE GOLDEN AGE OF ORNAMENTAL PENMANSHIP

**And thus—a significant era began. In the years following the death of Platt Rogers Spencer, a number of his former students continued their mentor's efforts in promoting the Spencerian System of Writing. Post-Civil War America was experiencing an unprecedented growth in commerce and industry. Thousands of veterans returning from the battlefields sought employment, and new job opportunities suddenly appeared in the fields of business, manufacturing and education. It was an active period of economic growth, and skilled penmen were in great demand to record all transactions of what became known as "mercantile pursuits."**

Several of the penmen soon established handwriting schools of their own. In addition, a few published handwriting manuals and copy books. Among Spencer's most successful students were Horace Shaylor, H. G. Eastman, Arthur Hinman and George Gaskell. Shaylor published his own lessons in the form of copy books; Eastman and Hinman each founded a business college where the primary emphasis was

on penmanship. George Gaskell similarly founded a school of penmanship studies, and then published a comprehensive book entitled *Gaskell's Compendium of Penmanship*. Through their efforts, these first generation students of Platt Rogers Spencer not only perpetuated his legacy, but further developed the forms of Spencerian Script.

As ornamental penmanship grew in popularity, an increasing number of penmen took delight in creating highly-embellished capital letters, flourishes and bird designs. During the closing decades of the nineteenth century, great interest was shown in artistic writing, and through the inspirational teaching of such instructors as those just mentioned, the most highly skilled individuals of the era surfaced from the ranks of emerging penmen. Men whose names today are legends as the great masters of Ornamental Penmanship began displaying their proficiency with a zeal unmatched by their predecessors. Henry Flickinger, William E. Dennis, Charles Paxton Zaner, Elmer Ward Bloser, A. D. Taylor, C. C. Canan, Edward Mills, Lloyd Kelchner, Francis B. Courtney, A. N. Palmer, Louis Madarasz, Fielding Schofield,

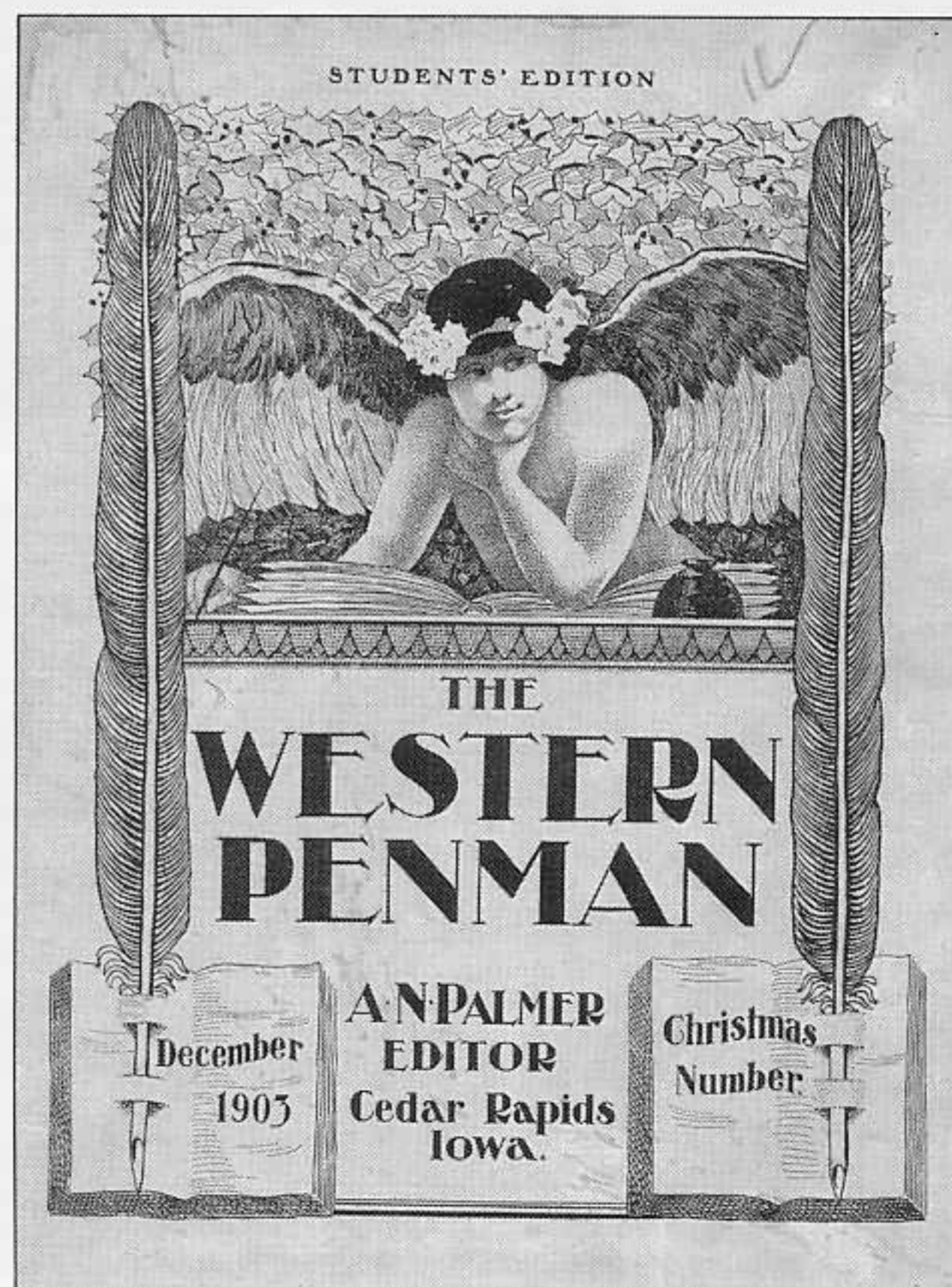
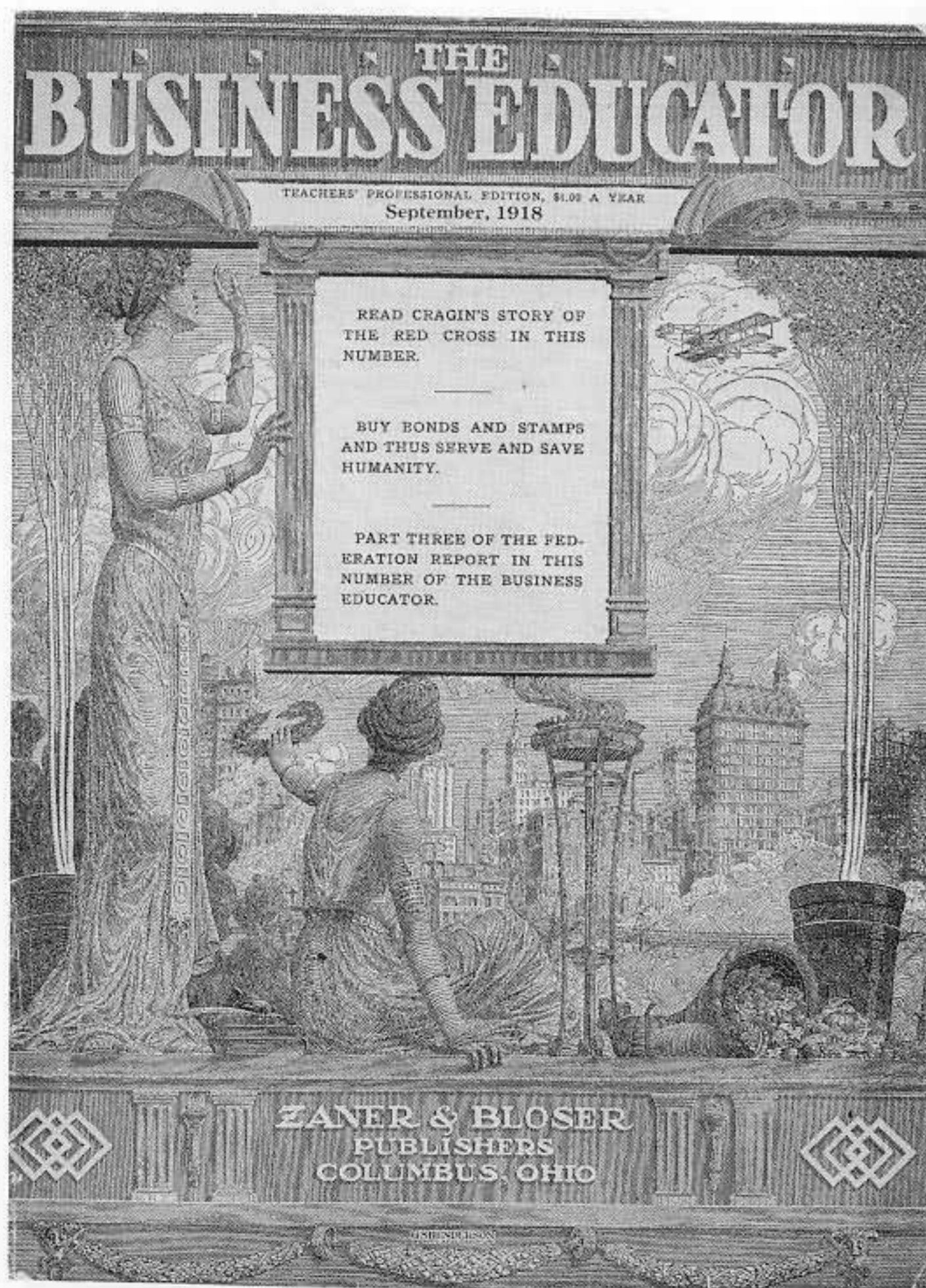
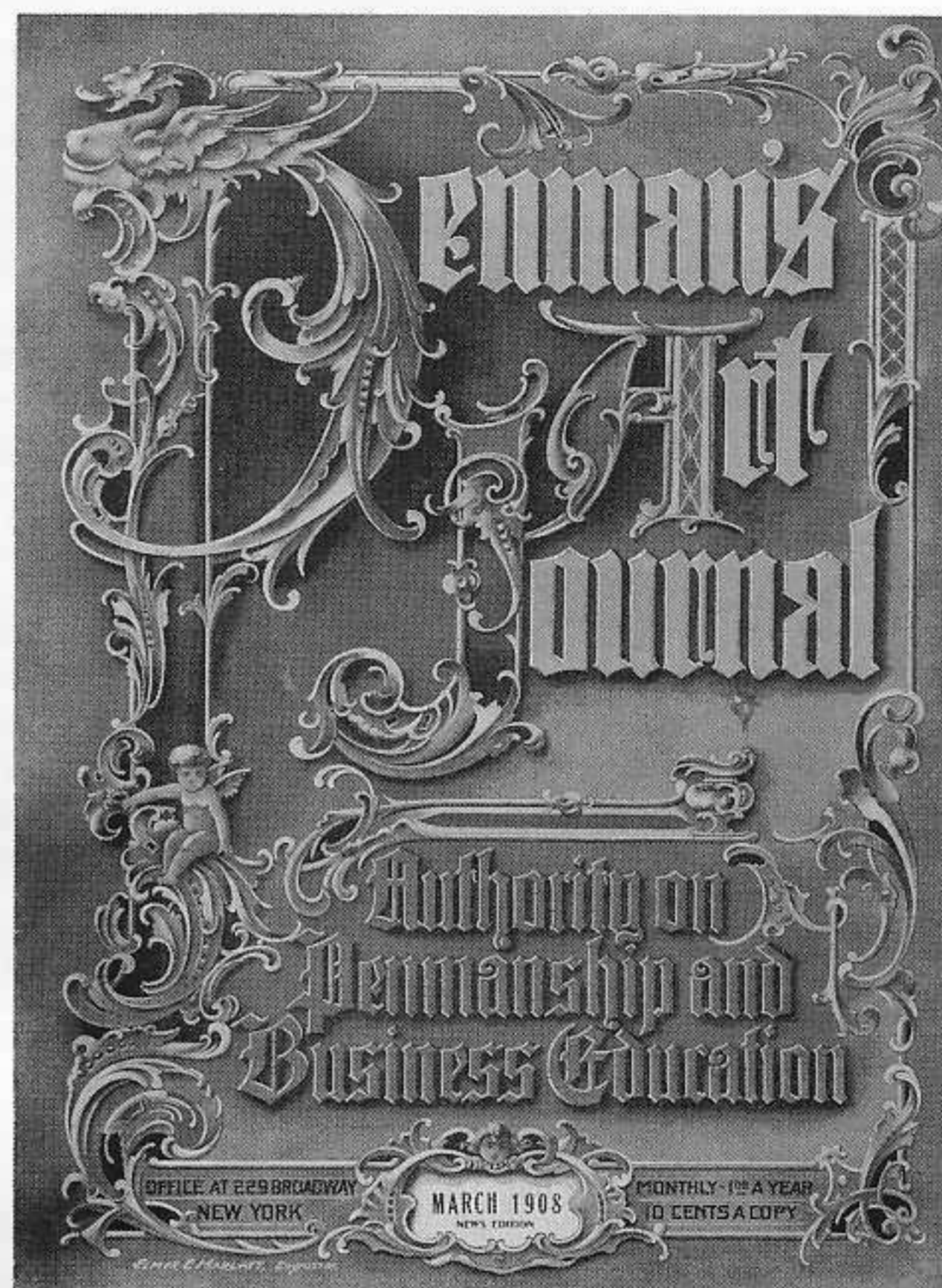


Willis Baird, Charlton V. Howe, Clinton H. Clark, Frederick Tamblin, John Williams, Silas Packard, H. P. Behrensmeyer and Harry Blanchard, among many others, taught scores of lessons and endlessly displayed their writing skills in the penmanship magazines of the day. By so doing, they influenced countless thousands of aspiring penmen, and set the standards for the very best that writing and the penmen's art could be.

### THE BUSINESS OF PENMANSHIP

With the increased use of ornamental penmanship in business, a natural market was created for a source of the supplies necessary to the penman. Several magazines devoted to the penmanship profession were published. Chief among these were the *Penman's Gazette*, published by G. A. Gaskell; the *Penman's Art Journal*, founded by Daniel T. Ames and later managed by Horace Healey; the *Chirographer* of E. K. Isaacs; the *Chirographic Quarterly* published by H. W. Kibbe; the *Western Penman* (which later became the *American Penman*), founded by A. N. Palmer, and the *Business Educator*, published by the Zaner-Bloser Company. Besides their standard fare of articles concerning the field of Penmanship, each issue contained numerous advertisements for a variety of tools, equipment, penmanship instruction and related products. Many different styles of penpoints were promoted under such names as Spencian, Esterbrook, Gillott, Zanerian, Hunt and Sprott. There was an assortment of "penmanship aides" as well, including the Myograph, the Royal Sleeve Protector, The Penman's Ring, the Triumph Penholder and the Auto Writing Ring.

Penholders were also prominently advertised by many penmen, but none were more prized than those made by Oscar Magnusson. Entirely crafted by hand, his holders featured exotic woods inlaid with ivory, and were perfectly balanced. Today, Magnusson penholders are true collectors items.

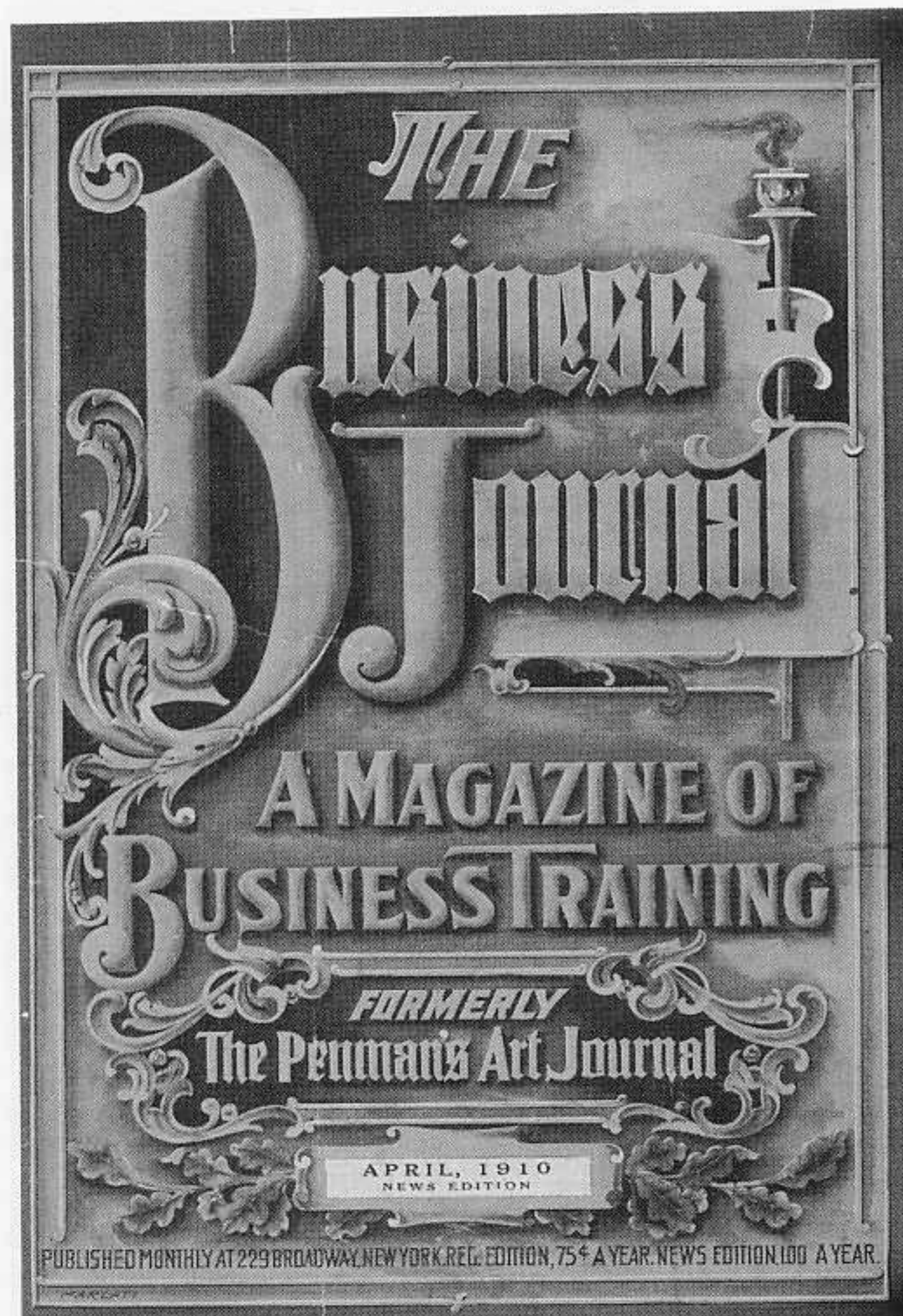




Regarding the subject of ink, the favorite writing fluids of the day were Korean Ink, (the choice of master penman Louis Madarasz) Arnold's Japan Ink, and Higgins Eternal Ink. This last variety, originated by Charles Higgins, is still available today and remains the preferred pre-bottled ink for ornamental writing. Unfortunately, the manufacture of Arnold's Ink and Madarasz's Korean Ink were discontinued many years ago. Besides penpoints and ink, a large inventory of supplemental writing supplies was offered through the *Auto Pen & Ink Manufacturing Company*, Chicago, Illinois, and the *Spencerian Pen Company*, New York, New York. As noted earlier, many books and pamphlets were also printed that boasted the "finest examples of penmanship." The *New Spencerian Compendium of Penmanship* (1879), authored by the five sons of Platt Rogers Spencer; *Gems of Penmanship* (1866) by Silas Packard and John Williams; and *Gaskell's Compendium of Penmanship* (1883) were some of the most significant publications. One particular book became more famous for its title page than its contents. The *Real Penwork Self Instructor In Penmanship* (1882) was the epitome of overinflated advertising. Far less comprehensive than the previous texts listed, this slender volume featured Spencerian script from the *New Spencerian Compendium of Penmanship* and off-hand flourishing from *Gems of Penmanship* as exemplars, and advocated a trace-and-copy method of practice.

Although these books were very popular, the *copybook* had become the mainstay of penmanship instruction. Used throughout our country's school systems for over 60 years,

these small booklets were consumable by design. As such, they were published and sold by the millions. In using these books, students would attempt to copy, as accurately as possible, a line of idealized penmanship printed at the top of each page. Thus, once completed by the student, further practice necessitated that the pupil begin anew, using another copy book. Most of the copy books, although authored by numerous penmen, primarily featured Spencerian letterforms. The Palmer copy books promoted "Palmer Penmanship," which was very similar to the style mentioned in Chapter 2 called *Business Writing*. Although there were many people claiming to have "the best means of instruction for an elegant hand," it was only natural that some of the most skilled devotees earned a respected reputation in the field of Penmanship. As the fame of these men and women spread, their influence in the art of writing similarly widened in scope. A select group of such artisans became known as "master penmen." Although never established as an "official" title, the master penmen were widely recognized and acknowledged for their talents. Those who achieved this status distinguished themselves in a variety of professional endeavors. Many of the more entrepreneurial individuals contributed frequently to the penmanship magazines mentioned earlier. In fact, for well over half a century, the majority of the published handwriting lessons were written by several generations of these master penmen. To the young writing enthusiasts of the period—excited with the anticipation of practicing new lettering exercises once their magazines arrived in the mail—the names of such promi-



## Palmer Method Summer School

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A Complete Normal Course in Primary Writing.

A Complete Normal Course in Intermediate and Advanced Writing.

Methods of Teaching Muscular Movement Writing as related to teachers and all grades of pupils in Elementry Schools.

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Institute Work, Blackboard Writing, Ornamental Writing, Text Lettering.

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Regular Session begins June 8. Special Session begins July 6.

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F. F. VON COURT, Field Manager for The A. N. Palmer Co. west of the Mississippi.

W. C. HENNING, Principal Cedar Rapids Business College, former Associate Editor American Penman.

For catalog and full information address

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BY MAIL

The undersigned has decided to take a few pupils, possessing the natural talent for lettering, and drill them in the necessary alphabets from hand made pen and ink copies, rounding out the course with a finished set of resolutions.

For terms, address,

P. W. COSTELLO

Engrosser and Illuminator,

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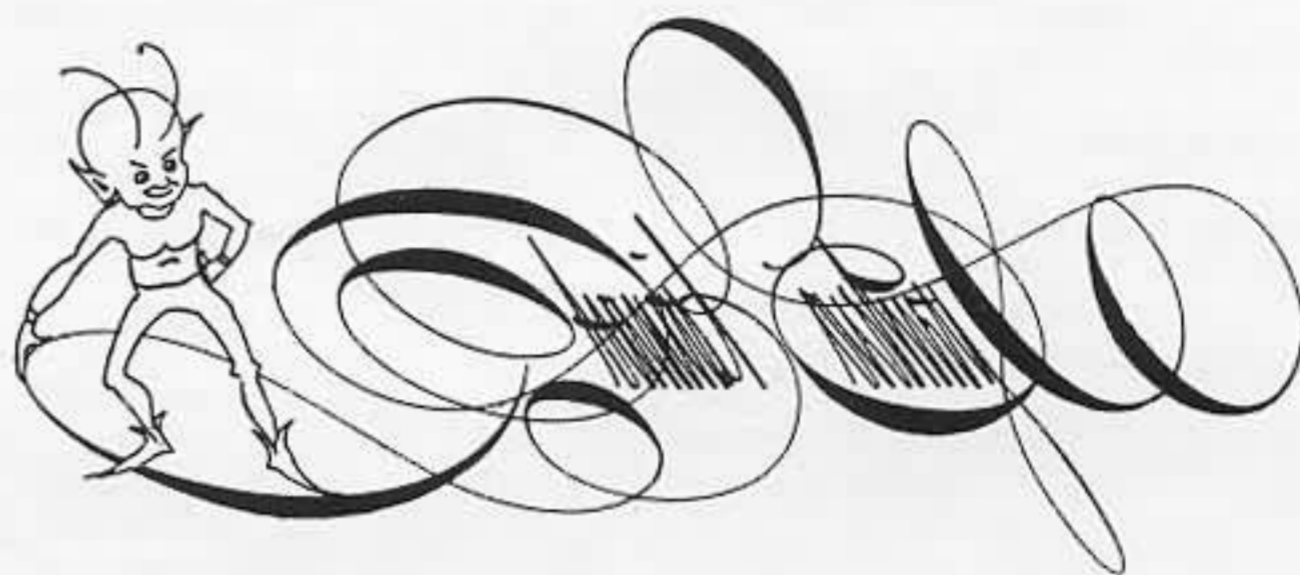




nent penmen became household words.

There were other professions in which the penmen engaged themselves. Several earned credibility in detecting forgeries as Examiners of Questioned Documents. These penmen served in the role of expert witness when called upon to testify in court or aid in other legal matters where authenticity was the issue. Most notable among such penmen was Francis B. Courtney. Known throughout the realm of penmanship as the "Pen Wizard," Courtney was indeed more versatile—and more novel—in his writing skills than virtually any other penman. Certainly there were other penmen who specialized in particular styles, and in their own domain, even surpassed Mr. Courtney's abilities. Surely no penman ever excelled in Business Writing to a greater degree than E. C. Mills or J. J. Bailey; in Engrosser's Script than Charlton Howe or Willis Baird; in Ornamental Penmanship than Louis Madarasz, C. P. Zaner or E. W. Bloser; or in the precise accuracy of letterform than A. D. Taylor or C. C. Canan. In the field of Off-Hand Flourishing, for their original designs and remarkable skills, it was said that Fielding Schofield, John D. Williams, Clinton H. Clark, Harry Blanchard and Henry P. Behrensmeyer were without peer, although many of the penmen were highly rated as flourishers. While these five gentlemen produced very elaborate, complex images of birds, quills and scrolls, the works of Zaner, William E. Dennis, George Gaskell, John Williams, Lloyd Kelchner, L. Faretra and Francis Courtney were similarly legendary, although perhaps not as pretentious. However, with his dexterous penmanship and flamboyant manner, Courtney's

work often seemed to defy the laws of possibility. Surely, he was one of the most prolific penmen, leaving behind a treasure of specimens for us to enjoy. As described in Chapter 2, he took delight in amazing other penmen with his own "Courtney's Script" (Figure 17) which could only be read when the surface of the paper is held at eye level, with the sight-of-vision looking directly in line with the letter angle of his writing. One's eyesight tends to foreshorten the lettering in this fashion, and in doing so (squinting sometimes helps the process), the writing becomes legible.



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Gives the correct position for any system. Immediate results. Pays for itself the time saved first lesson. Prevents cramped fingers.

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### Mills's Correspondence School of Penmanship

and improved your spare time. Before you do another thing, sit down now and write me a letter, enclose a stamp, and I will tell you some things that will put many a dollar in your pocket in the future. Address

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*Learn to Write*

I can make a good penman of you at home during spare time. Write for my free book, "How to Become a Good Penman." It contains specimens and tells how others mastered penmanship by my methods. Your name will be elegantly written on a card if you enclose stamp.

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*Korean*

**IT IS \$3** for a large cake of Korean Ink, the kind that is perfectly black on shades—mellow and soft on elusive, but firm hair lines. It flows beautifully and is an incentive to beautiful writing. Your name written in ornate style and etching made for \$2. Cuts of any matter in script made to order—cuts that have vim and dash—Madarasz quality.

*BUY THE INK,* and improve your writing.  
**L. MADARASZ, 1281 Third Avenue, New York**

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With greater ease and surety by using the

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**WRITING RING.**

State your ring-size: Small, medium or large. Sample aluminum ring and supply of elastics, postpaid, 10c, stamps taken.

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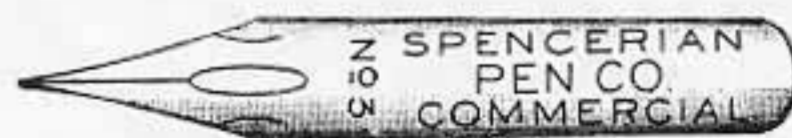


Fits the arm snugly. Needs no pinning nor tying. Just slip them on and the special elastic goring does the rest. Made of duck in white, brown and black. Easily laundered. Small, medium or large size. Sent postpaid for 25 cents a pair.

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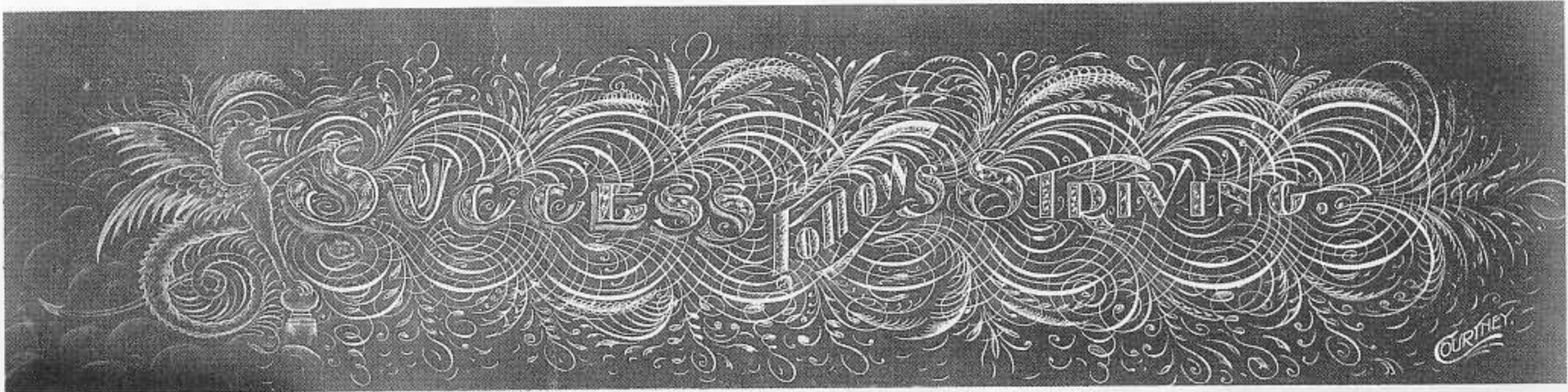
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349 Broadway, New York City




Courtney's other unique forms of penmanship—Needlestitch Script and Figure Writing (Figures 16, 18) became challenges to the best penmen. In his personal correspondence, he had no equal. His fish and blue bird flourishes\* were a delight to behold, and he frequently used a yellow pencil to shade the entire paper surface, except in the location of his signature. In his commercial endeavors, Courtney advertised his correspondence courses with the slogan "the course you hear so much about," and published his "Lessons In Dashy Writing."\*\* As a showman, he had no


rivals. He took delight in demonstrating his prowess with a pen, and on numerous occasions, displayed this in an imposing manner with a piece of chalk on a blackboard. Examples of two such pieces of work are shown below. The size of each board measured 5½ feet high and 23 feet long! This work is amazing in itself, and yet, on one of the blackboards, he even signed his name in perfect ornamental penmanship *upside down*! In truth, Francis B. Courtney was unique among penmen.



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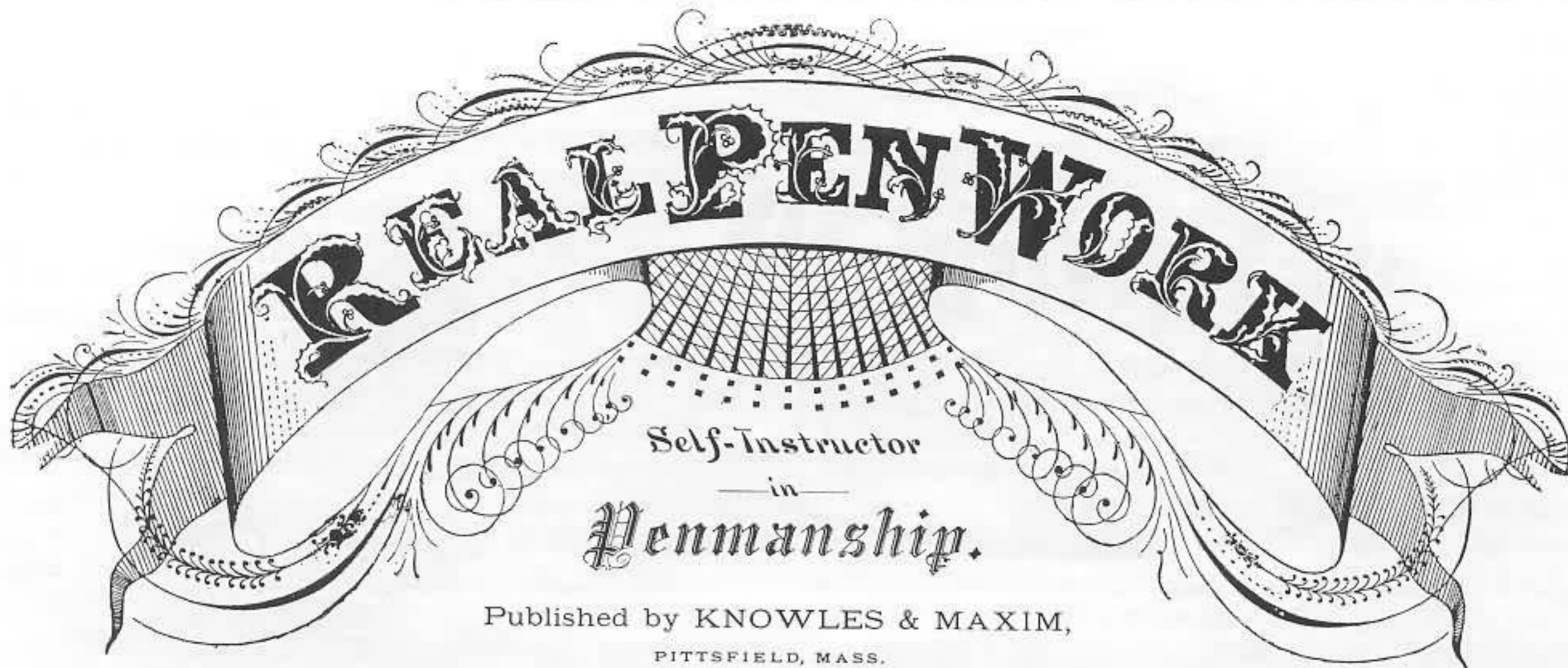


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\* Courtney's fish and blue-bird flourishes are reproduced in the PLATES section entitled NOVELTY STYLES.  
\*\* Lessons in Dashy Writing are reproduced in the Appendix section.





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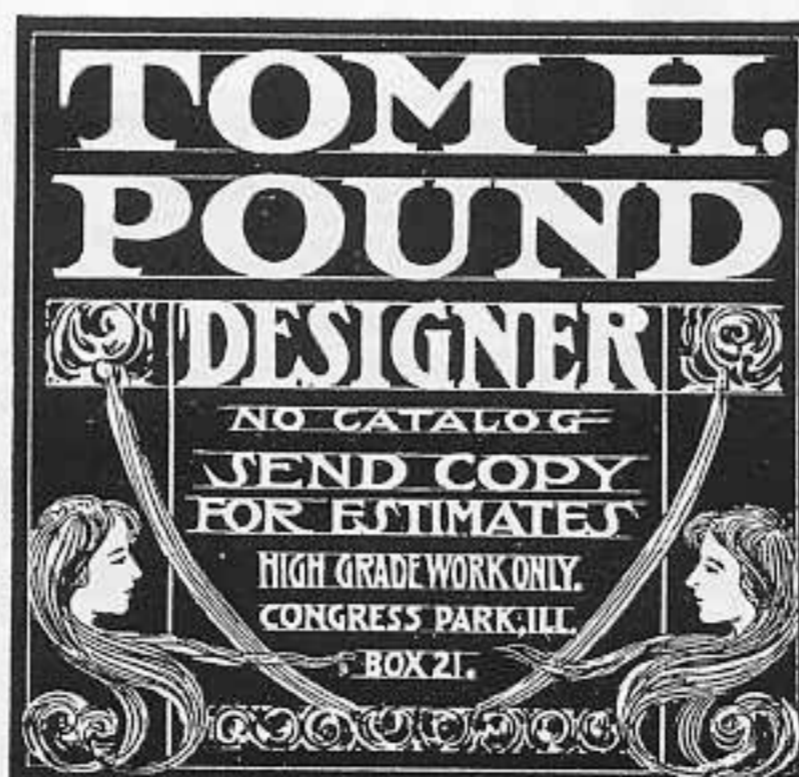
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## AUSTIN NORMAN PALMER

To be sure, there were many other penmen whose noteworthy careers and energetic personalities provide interesting fare to be retold and once again brought to light. Although an entire volume would be required to accommodate an all-inclusive list, there is a single penman whose contributions to the American system of writing were of such significance that he must be mentioned. His name was Austin Norman Palmer.

A. N. Palmer was born on a farm at Fort Jackson, St. Lawrence County, New York on December 22, 1860. His early youth was spent on the farm until the death of his father in 1873, when the family moved to Manchester, New Hampshire. In New England young Austin entered public school and received his only instruction in writing from the copybooks that were to be his most frequent object of attack in later years. After completing the public school course, his mother advised him to enter the business college of famed penman George Gaskell. It was here that the young student first became aware that writing skills could reach such a degree of perfection, for Gaskell's office walls were lined with all forms of ornamental specimens. As so many had done before him, A. N. Palmer fell under the spell of the bounding stags, graceful birds, and other involved flourishes that were the pride of the master penman.

At Gaskell's business college, Palmer became a friend of William E. Dennis, who was a fellow pupil. Young Dennis possessed a natural talent for ornamental penmanship, and although Palmer was aware that he might never reach Dennis' expertise as a penman, he did attain a proficiency in ornamental writing, and upon his graduation, was awarded a flourished letter of recommendation from Gaskell himself.

Palmer's formal education ended with a course at the Literary Institute in New Hampton, New Hampshire, after which he set out to organize classes in penmanship. He gradually worked his way west, teaching in Rockville, Indiana and St. Joseph, Missouri, where he taught in a business college.

Up to this time Palmer had not been forced to make any *practical* application of his handwriting skill. In 1880, he was offered a position in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, with the Iowa Railroad Land Company. Since the first practical typewriter was not yet perfected, all business records were still kept by hand in the late 1800's. Clerks, bookkeepers, accountants, and other business-related professions had to do a vast amount of writing in the shortest period of time. There was no opportunity to demonstrate skill in flourished birds and shaded capitals. As Palmer analyzed this circumstance, he soon discovered that there was more to his situation than merely the fact that he had been trained to flourish his writ-

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ing. He observed that the more important factor seemed to be that where it was customary for the ornamental penman to flourish all capitals with a free-arm swing, with the arm completely off the desk, and to draw the small letters carefully with finger and wrist motion, the clerks used, instead, an entirely different movement to write. The most swift and tireless penmen he observed appeared to keep the arm on the desk at all times and formed their letters with little or no motion of the fingers. After he adapted this movement for his own writing, Palmer soon acquired a free, tireless style of penmanship for himself.

The discovery of what he called "muscular movement" writing turned A. N. Palmer's thoughts back to teaching, for he soon resigned his position at a business office to work for the Cedar Rapids Business College at a lower salary. He began considering the educational possibilities of muscular movement writing, and decided that in order to promote the practical advantages of his style and at the same time offer instruction, he would need to advertise. This was more challenging than it appears, for all the penmanship magazines of the day focused on *whole-arm movement* writing; Palmer's system was much different. The result was that in April, 1884, at 24 years of age, A. N. Palmer developed and introduced a new publication into the field of penmanship. Named *The Western Penman* because he hoped that the magazine would attract an audience in the mid-western

states, this energetic owner/editor thus embarked upon a career that was destined to have the most far-reaching effects upon the teaching of penmanship in the United States since the days of Platt Rogers Spencer.

From the time of the establishment of *The Western Penman* until 1900, a period of 16 years, A. N. Palmer kept busy teaching in various cities in the middle west, but he never ceased publication of the magazine. In 1888, he published the first edition of *Palmer's Guide to Muscular Movement Writing*, in which we find the first definition of "muscular movement." It is, as Mr. Palmer said in his introduction:

"... the movement of the muscles of the arm from the shoulder to the wrist, while keeping the fleshy portion of the arm just forward of the elbow [held] stationary on the desk. This movement should be used in all capitals and in all small letters, except the extended stem and loop, where a slight extension and contraction of the fingers holding the pen is permissible."

This definition shows that as early as 1888 the teaching principles of the new method were pretty well formulated. The actual copies presented for practice, however, still showed the strong influence of the Spencerian forms. Letters are narrow, and loops are elongated, while moderate flourishes and slight shades characterize the capital forms.

JULY 1921

THE American Penman

THE A. N. PALMER CO.

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New York

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Quoting from *Writing, Past and Present*:

Mr. Palmer's success with large classes of students in business colleges had by this time convinced him of the fact that anyone could learn to write a free, tireless hand with his new method. In his desire to spread this knowledge and also to provide a self-teaching course he conceived the notion of preparing a course of lessons for publication in the *Penman* that would carry as instructions a stenographic report of his remarks before his class in the Cedar Rapids Business College. The idea was carried out and over a period of six months he was given a daily transcribed report of every lesson. The course was published in the *Penman* beginning in the September, 1899 issue. "Not the least important thing the author has had in mind," said Mr. Palmer in his opening paragraph, "is that in hundreds of schools *The Western Penman* has been adopted as a textbook in writing, while in others it is used as an auxiliary, work being assigned for outside practice from its pages from time to time."

This published course of lessons did a great deal to impress school people with the practical nature of the handwriting instruction Mr. Palmer was advocating, and it led directly to

*\*Writing, Past and Present by Carroll Gard, 1937; A. N. Palmer Company, New York.*

an invitation from The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Monroe, Michigan to have Mr. Palmer teach the two hundred Sisters who would be assembled there during the summer months.

Dr. Joseph S. Taylor, former associate superintendent of the New York City schools, in an article entitled "A. N. Palmer—An Appreciation," written after Mr. Palmer's death in 1927, has given a graphic description of that incident, which resulted in the publication of the first edition of the *Palmer Method of Business Writing*. Quoting from Dr. Taylor:

Mr. Palmer went to Monroe expecting that he would be called upon to teach an hour or two a day. Looking on the map he found that Monroe was on Lake Michigan about midway between Detroit and Toledo. He decided that this would be a fine time for a vacation—an hour or two of teaching and the remainder of the time sailing on the lake or spending pleasant periods along its shores. When he reached Monroe he immediately sought an audience with the Mother Superior and explained his plan. Raising a warning hand she said: Now, Mr. Palmer, let me explain our plan. We have two hundred Sisters here and we want to devote one full week exclusively to the study and practice of muscular movement handwriting under your direction. There will be fifty Sisters in a class; classes will begin at eight in the morning and continue to twelve o'clock. Thus you will have an opportunity to teach four classes of one hour each. The



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That program was carried out, and Mr. Palmer explains that he put every drop of his mental and physical vitality into the work, and the Sisters worked just as hard as he did.


At the close of Mr. Palmer's lessons, the Mother Superior asked for a conference and explained to him that while she could not adopt a monthly publication as a textbook in her schools, she would be glad to give an immediate order for enough copies of the lessons that had been printed in *The Western Penman* for all her schools, if such lessons were put into book form. Thus it happened that the first edition of the *Palmer Method of Business Writing* was printed for the Sisters of I.H.M., whose Mother House is at Monroe, Mich., and who conduct numerous schools in Detroit and other parts of Michigan, as well as in other States.

With such encouragement by the Sisters and with *The Palmer Method of Business Writing* now in the form of a textbook, the adoption of his instructions and advocated style grew at an astonishing rate beginning in 1900. In the course of a few weeks, 30,000 copies were printed and sold; in 1901, 90,000 copies; and in 1912, 1,000,000 copies were sold throughout the country.

In 1904 A. N. Palmer conducted a penmanship exhibit at the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition in St. Louis. His exhibition generated nation-wide attention from school authorities everywhere. In an early issue of *Palmer Penmanship Pointers*, he described the events:

*It was quite difficult to get a foot hold in the public schools. The big publishers seemed to control the situation and were selling copy-books everywhere. Results were not considered above preconceived notions and the influence of the agents of copy-book publishers was sufficient to keep me out of the public schools. I did, however, obtain adoptions in several small places and some good results followed; but there was not the enthusiasm among public school teachers that I found among the Catholic teachers. Some public school teachers were not willing to study, practice and master the progressive steps in advance of teaching them to their pupils. But the work continued to spread. During the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, in St. Louis, a very comprehensive exhibit of Palmer Method penmanship was made, nearly all of it being from Catholic schools.*

An Associate Superintendent of the City of New York saw the exhibit. He left word with the clerk in charge that he would like to know more about the Palmer Method, and would like to see Mr. Palmer when he visited New York. This resulted in the listing of the Palmer Method for use in the public schools of New York City. At first principals showed



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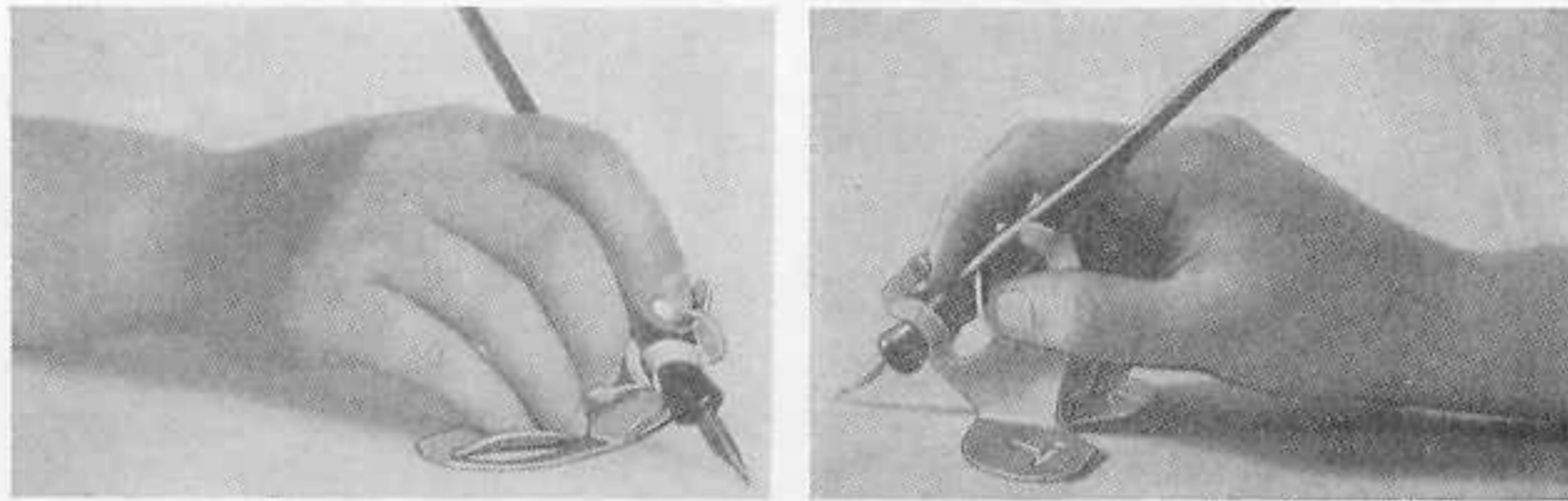
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**Learn Penmanship by Mail.** Be a penman. It pays well. It's interesting. Practice evenings and spare time. Many teachers make our Courses. We give the best instruction. Twice as many lessons as others. More copies and better copies. More instruction and better instruction. More criticisms and better criticisms of practice work. One young lady living on a farm took a six months' course by mail, and we placed her in a position as teacher in one of the largest and best Business Colleges in the United States. Others are doing as well. Business Writing, 12 lessons, \$3.50; Complete Course, \$5.00. Ornamental, \$7.00. Special Course for teachers in Pen Lettering and Diploma Filling, only \$3.00. Pens, penholders and paper furnished free. Your name on a dozen beautiful cards, 20c. Small specimen for stamp. Handsome catalogue free. Write today.

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Strayer's Business College. Philadelphia, Pa.



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## Writing Glider — Practical and Educational FOR RIGHT AND LEFT-HANDED WRITERS

Establishes simultaneously and instantly through kinaesthetic sensation the following:

- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Thumb Position        | Slant of Paper     |
| Finger Position       | Slant of Penholder |
| Wrist Position        | Slant of Writing   |
| Heel of Hand Position | Arm Movement       |

### Salient Features

1. Fits any hand.
2. Accommodates any pencil, penholder, either straight or oblique, fountain pen, or crayola.
3. Allows pencil or penholder to be removed from glider without disengaging the finger from the writing instrument; thereby, retaining the kinaesthetically correct hand position and arm movement.
4. Is made for left-handed writers as well as for right-handed writers.
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6. It may be purchased in the following colors: Red, gold, green, black, orange, and silver. It may also be purchased plain.
7. Weighs less than one-half an ounce and is indestructible which is extremely efficient and economical.
8. A set of six or seven gliders which includes a left-hand glider is sufficient for a room of forty pupils.
9. Adapts itself to any system of writing.

#### PRICES

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 Plain Glider, 35c                      | 1 Plated Glider, 45c                      |
| 1 Dozen Plain Gliders, \$3.60            | 1 Dozen Plated Gliders, \$4.50            |
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All of the above prices are postpaid

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Prepares persons as Professional Penmen, Supervisors of Writing and Engrassing Artists. Catalog filled with handsome specimens free. Address—

### ZANER & BLOSER

Columbus - - - - - Ohio

#### CHINESE STICK INK

Because customers have found the ink as represented, black, it dries quickly and unlike other inks, pencil lines can be erased without disturbing the blackness of the ink, they have requested special rates for the ink in quantities of from 20 to 50 sticks, to sell among their friends.

The fact that one ordered 30 of the small size sticks, proves that it is a good seller.

I should be pleased to quote prices to "Business College" men, who would care to carry it in stock to sell to their students.

If you haven't used it send me 50c for small size, or \$2.00 for large size stick of ink. Instructions as to how to use it sent with every stick.

Address, R. A. CEPEK, 723 Throop St. Chicago, Ill

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A NEW, fascinating, and practical Art, very easily learned. Individual instruction. This Art should be acquired by clerks, book-keepers, cashiers, merchants, etc. Will increase your value to employer. Cost of instruction and complete outfit, only \$1.25. Enroll now, or write for detailed prospectus. Address



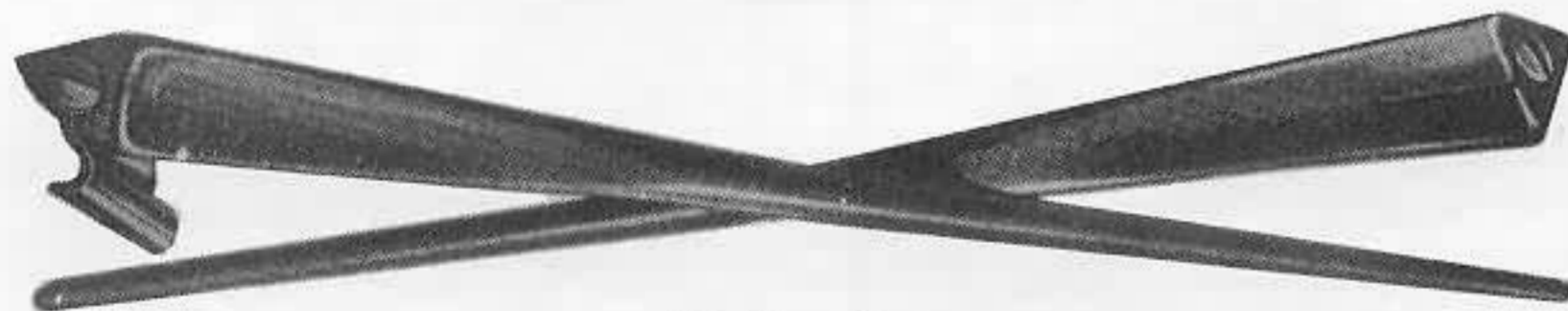
World's Correspondence School of Pen Art, Junction City, O.

# THE RANSOMERIAN

SOMETHING ENTIRELY NEW IN PENHOLDERS

The Holder that Makes Writing a Pleasure

C. W. RANSOM — Patentees — W. L. GORDON



Pat. Nov. 17, '08.

Fits the fingers, does not cramp the hand. Used exclusively by C. W. Ransom, President of the Ransomian School of Penmanship, in his expert writing. Used and endorsed by the leading professional penmen. Read what a few of them say:

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| "It is a beauty."—Flickinger.      | "Hope you sell a bunch of them."—Stacy.               |
| "Nothing just as good."—Weatherly. | "The best penholder ever put on the market."—Bedinger |

A score of others likewise have tried the holder and will use no other.

This beautiful holder is made of solid hard rubber, and will last a life time. Order today and do not deprive yourself of the pleasure of using this wonderful invention.

Price each, postpaid 50c. Special prices to schools and colleges.

Address **Ransom & Gordon Penholder Co.**

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## SCHOOL NEWS and PRACTICAL EDUCATOR

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SCIENTIFICALLY designed to meet the requirements of the most exacting penmen. Try it and you'll use no other. \$1.00 each.

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## STUDIO ENGROSSING

While individual penmen promoted their skills through magazine and mail advertising, in public demonstration, and by means of written correspondence, engrossing artists tended to ply their trade from the more formalized aspect of a business, that is, a studio. At this point, before we delve further into the subject, let us take a moment to define a somewhat confusing issue among calligraphers: this being the difference between *illumination* and *engrossing*.

By definition, **Engrossing** is an art form where a body of text, usually congratulatory or memorializing in content, is designed and ornamented with elaborate border treatments and decorative words and letters. Strictly speaking, **illumination**—as the action of applying burnished gold to the surface of the design or individual letter(s), is a technique commonly used in engrossing. When referring to illumination as the formal name for a style of decorative treatment rendered to a lettered text, it varies from engrossing in several distinct ways. These are:

**Historical:** *Illumination* was a product of the Middle Ages in Europe, most generally referring to the 13th–16th centuries. *Engrossing* as an art is primarily American in origin, dating from the late 19th century into the mid-20th century. In 19th-century England, the style of illuminating evolved toward engrossing as newer, non-gothic letterforms grew popular. However, engrossing reached its height as an art form and in popularity in America during the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship.

### Styles of

**Decoration:** *Illumination* was characterized by very colorful detailed borders, boasting stylized floral patterns, imaginary animal and human forms, and often a single extremely ornamental letter. The text of illumination is usually in a heavy-bodied Gothic, Celtic, or Uncial alphabet style. Decoration within the body tends to be minimal and of secondary importance to the complex border treatment. Also, the decora-

tive imagery rendered in illumination is frequently of a religious nature.

*Engrossing* also boasts colorful, detailed borders, but the treatments tend to be somewhat delicate in nature, rather than the heavier-styled borders of illumination. In engrossed works of art, a greater variety of decorative techniques—more modern in origin—are used in the ornamentation. Watercolor washes and shading, stippling, cross-hatching, shadowing, photograph illustrations, and handtooling treatments, especially in gilded areas, are commonly displayed. While the techniques of filigree and foliation were used in illumination, their form took on a more graceful and delicate appearance in engrossing.

### Purpose of Content:

*Illumination* was primarily religious in tone; symbolic illustrations reflected religious doctrine and biblical themes. *engrossing*, as previously mentioned, was mainly of a congratulatory or memorializing nature.

## THE PROMOTION OF ENGROSSING

Engrossers tended to be a combination of master penman, illustrator and designer. In addition, they frequently were experts in off-hand flourishing. This combination of skills rendered the engrossing artist as a fairly unique artist. In promoting their trade, individual engrossers and formal studios created elaborate advertisements which displayed the name of the artist/studio in a highly ornamental design. Appearing within the design were words stating all the various products and services the agency offered. As there were master penmen in the field of ornamental penmanship, so too, were there master engrossers. In fact, many of the distinguished engrossers were also highly respected master penmen.

At times, the multi-disciplined nature of engrossing caused a degree of bewilderment to exist among the artists in try-

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ARMS AND CRESTS

S.C. MALONE'S FINE ART  
ILLUMINATION

TESTIMONIALS, MEMORIALS, DIPLOMAS  
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BOOK PLATES, GENEALOGIES, TITLE PAGES, PANELS,  
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STUDIO  
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MEMORIAL TABLETS, TOMBS AND MONUMENTS.  
And Expert in the Great or Disputed Handwriting



# SILVER JUBILEE

1891

December 19<sup>th</sup>

1916

**A**t a Regular Meeting of the Holy Name Society of The Assumption Church held on Sunday November twelfth One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixteen, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted: —

WHEREAS the REVEREND

**W. J. DONALDSON, D.D.**

has completed Twenty-five Years Service in the Priesthood and Fourteen Years as the Beloved Pastor of The Assumption Church; and —

WHEREAS By his Zeal and Generous Labors he has reared an imposing edifice and beautiful rectory, and has by his priestly dignity and sterling character gained the love and esteem of his people

**RESOLVED**, That the members of the Holy Name Society of The Assumption Church unite in giving this Testimonial to their Beloved and Honored Pastor as a token of their Heartfelt Appreciation, and pledge their sympathy in his present illness and their prayers for his speedy recovery

*James H. Cunningham*  
President  
*Michael J. ...*  
Secretary



ing to explain their craft. This somewhat confusing idea was once expressed by the man who became known as "America's Dean of Engrossing," William E. Dennis. Dennis was the true epitome of the most skilled artist in all fields of penmanship. His penmanship, off-hand flourishing, engrossing skills and design abilities were of the first order. As a partner of Willis A. Baird, the acknowledged master of engrossers script—and a renowned master engrosser as well—their combined efforts produced some of the most magnificent art pieces of the Golden Age. Yet, while he was a famed authority on the subject of engrossing, Dennis wrote the following in a 1919 issue of the *Business Educator*:

### WHAT IS ENGROSSING?

#### Wanted: a Name

What is Engrossing? According to Webster's Dictionary, it is "To copy in a large hand"—Engrosser—"One who copies in a large fair hand."

Now let us see what some are doing who are called "engrossers." They are not only supposed to write a large or fair hand and give it the effect of copperplate engraving, but have at their finger ends about every style of lettering, among which may be mentioned the Roman alphabet, block letters, Old English, German text, Round text, Missal text, etc., which are especially difficult and require a great deal of practice. In addition to this, they must know something of antique scroll work, particularly the acanthus leaf, which appears to be the foundation of most ornaments. Up-to-date engrossers must know considerable about illuminating; for much of the high class engrossing at present is being done in the illuminator's style, which was used so much before the art of printing. Engrossers must be skillful with the brush in order to do a neat, effective wash drawing in soft black and white tones, or in harmonious colors. Some of the engrossers are also able to do good portrait work with either pen or brush. They must draw reasonably well almost anything which may be appropriate or emblematic in a piece of "engrossing."

Last, but by no means least, the engrosser must be something of a designer in order to arrange all this work in a

manner pleasing to the eye. So it appears that the trade of an engrosser is a sort of combination of many things, and the more he excels in all of them the higher grade of work will he be able to turn out.

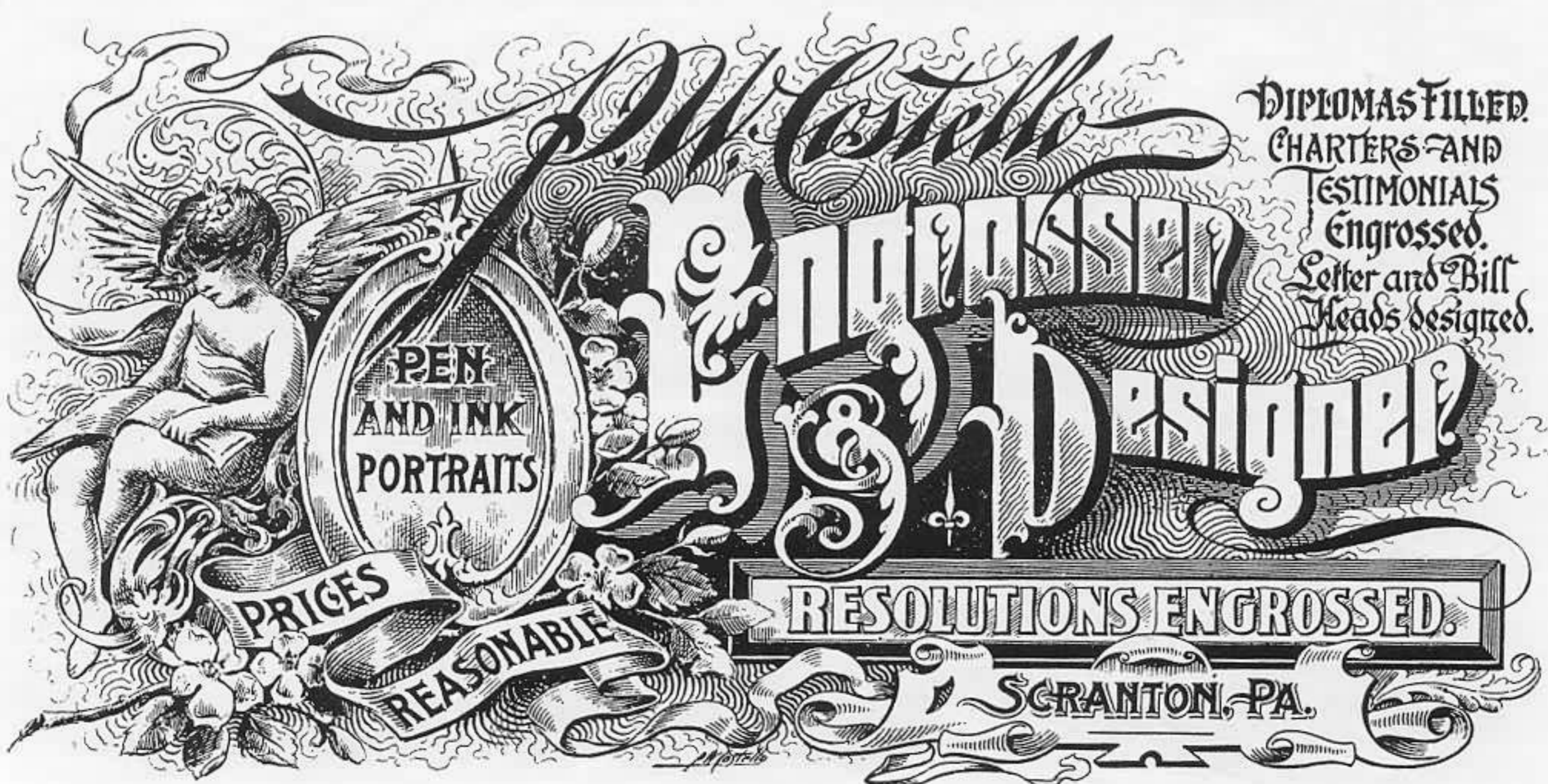
Viewing the work as a whole of first-class engrossers it certainly seems as if they needed a different name from "engrosser." Their work calls for a broader and more dignified term than "engrossing." A few have added the word "art" to the name—"art engrossing," and while this is quite an improvement it doesn't seem to fill the bill.

Ask any "engrosser" what his business is and it is hard for him to give an intelligible answer which will at once convey a clear and concise idea of his work. If he says "engrosser" it is generally interpreted that he just copies legal documents, etc. If he says "penman" that is but little better, for although he is expected to be highly skillful in about every kind of penmanship, that is really but a small part of the work. If he says "designer," that is very indefinite, for there are about as many kinds of designers as there are trees in a forest. He might say "letterer"—that is one very important part of the work, but how about the rest of it?

So who can invent a name or a term which will express the right meaning without going into a long explanation? I have been doing "engrossing" steadily for thirty years, and have never been able to find a suitable name for this occupation.

Anyone who has followed this line for years and worked in all its different branches will tell you, and very truthfully, too, that to make a first-class "engrosser" one must give ten to fifteen years' constant practice, and even then he will find a great deal more can be learned.

If one will reflect a moment on the subject it will be easy to understand why this work is called "engrossing." Years ago, I can't say how many, resolutions and such forms were just written in a "large fair hand," with perhaps a very little lettering, and the work at that time was called by its right name, "engrossing." Then more elaborate lettering, scroll work, ornaments, a little designing; then more elaborate designs, emblematic drawings, portraits, etc., then a little color introduced. More color, and finally illuminating, rich





in color, elegant in design and presenting a beautiful pictorial effect. So that at present "engrossing" can be rightfully dignified as an art, for certainly without the true touch of an artist such beautiful productions could not be turned out as are at present being done by skilled workmen who are labeled "engrossers."

It will be interesting to hear what others in this line might

have to say on the subject. The work is still progressing, constantly requiring a higher grade of skill and more knowledge of the principles of real art; so it is about time we invented another name and discarded that moth-eaten term "ENGROSSING."

W. E. Dennis,  
357 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y.

Resolutions adopted by  
**The Williams Land Company.**

**WHEREAS,**

The grim hand of death on the  
twenty-fifth of February, A. D. 1915,  
removed from us our beloved associate and friend,

**Martin K. Gatewore,**

**Whereas** He was a kind husband and father, a most sincere friend, a valued business associate, and loved by all who knew him. We mourn his untimely demise and extend to the bereaved and sorrowing family our sincere and heartfelt sympathy;

**Resolved** THEREFORE, BE IT That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon our minutes and a copy thereof suitably engrossed and presented to his family.

**Committee**

William Barrant,

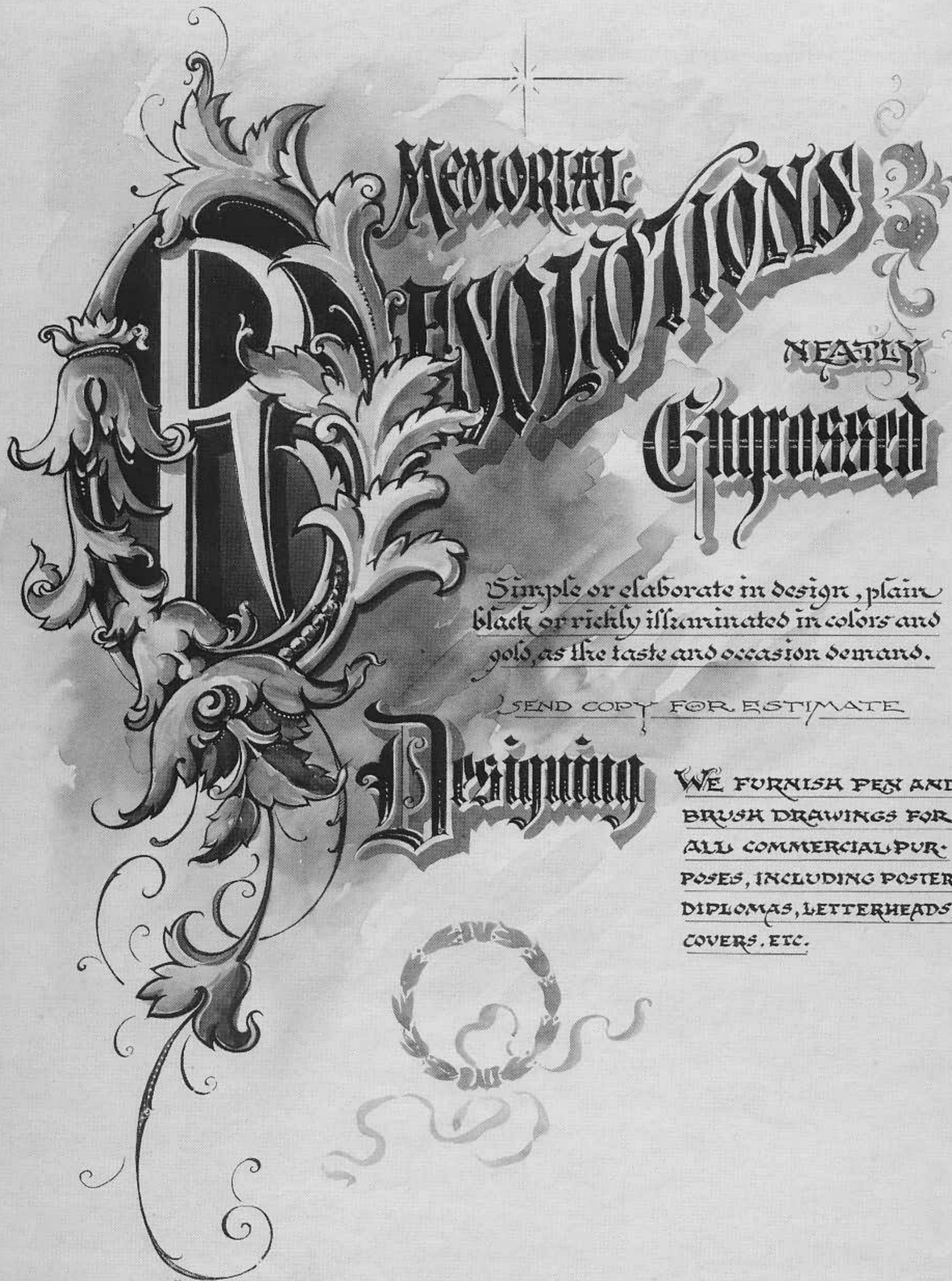
King S. Miller

Henry J. Schellkase

Secretary

*W. E. Dennis*





MEMORIAL DESIGNS

NEATLY

Guaranteed

Simple or elaborate in design, plain black or richly illuminated in colors and gold, as the taste and occasion demand.

SEND COPY FOR ESTIMATE

Designing

WE FURNISH PEN AND BRUSH DRAWINGS FOR ALL COMMERCIAL PURPOSES, INCLUDING POSTERS, DIPLOMAS, LETTERHEADS, COVERS, ETC.



1897





IN MEMORIAM

JERRY J. HORAN

Born December 15, 1885 - Died April 27, 1937

WHEREAS

We assemble at this meeting of our Chicago Flat Janitors Union, Local No. 1, B. S. E. U., heavy of heart and deeply conscious of the tremendous loss our Local Union, as well as our International Union and the entire Labor Movement, has suffered by the death of our President, leader and personal friend, Jerry J. Moran; and

WHEREAS, The many thousands who knew him, found in Jerry J. Moran executive ability, a strong sense of justice and fair play, a charitable and humane heart, always ready to serve his fellow man; and

WHEREAS, While we shall suffer from the loss of our leader and friend, we are mindful of the grief and tears of his bereaved family; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we, the officers and members of the Chicago Flat Janitors Union, Local No. 1, B. S. E. U., in regular meeting assembled, do hereby convey to his beloved wife, his daughter, his brothers, his sisters, and his nephew, George K. Reese, our condolences and sincere sympathy in their great bereavement, and that as evidence of our great love for and appreciation of our departed President, we respectfully request that our Union may have the privilege of providing a mausoleum wherein his remains may be interred; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be suitably engrossed and furnished to his wife, Mrs. Mora Moran, and a copy likewise furnished to his daughter, Mrs. Helen Curran, and to his nephew, George K. Reese.

Resolutions presented by Honorable Oscar W. Nelson were unanimously adopted at Musicians Hall, Chicago, Illinois, May 6th, 1937

Gus. Van Heek Recording Secretary William L. McFetridge President



THE HARRY STUDIO, CHICAGO

A fine example of Italian White Vine engrossing by Chester Cook.



**S.C. MALONE,**  
ARTIST PENMAN,  
HERALDIC, GENEALOGICAL AND  
HANDWRITING EXPERT,  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

Elegant Designs for Memorial Tablets,  
Tombs, Monuments,  
Silverware, Fine Jewelry Etc.

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in All Branches of  
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Studio 331 North Charles Street.

## PENMAN'S HALL OF FAME

The listing of men and women who were prominent in the various fields of penmanship is long. In the years between the Civil War and World War II, literally thousands of individuals practiced "the penman's art." Of this multitude, perhaps as many as several hundred achieved the status of "Master." Among these, few more than one hundred were widely known, primarily because of the public exposure they gained from writing articles for penmanship magazines. Such magazines frequently featured a small photograph of the person who contributed the article. From time to time, photos of various other penmen were published with brief biographical sketches of their lives. Sadly, though, the magazines have long since ceased publication.

To the many millions of people alive today whose senses have but slight recollection—or none at all—of *taking pride in one's penmanship*, the individuals we now present may seem to be little more than illustrated excerpts from the past. However, in the course of our narrative, the following men and women represent the champions of a unique—although somewhat forgotten—period in history. Prior to the publication of this work, information about these penmen was shared primarily by those who peruse the old penmanship magazines, or the relatively few who still hold personal memories of the era.

There is always a degree of risk involved in gathering information for the purpose of presenting to the public some sort of definitive list. It matters not what the subject may be; in offering such a listing one is liable to offend some reader because, unintentionally perhaps, a particular item—or person—is not included in the register. It is with this realization that the author has endeavored to provide a glimpse of

those men and women who achieved public acknowledgment in the art of penmanship. I do so with the following guidelines: In several years of conducting research for this project, I collected the names of people whose skill in penmanship was written about, referred to, cited, promoted, acknowledged, featured, displayed, and otherwise made reference to in print. In my efforts to pursue this endeavor, my travels have extended throughout our country and into Canada, and I have examined nearly seven decades of magazines, copybooks and newsletters dedicated to the art of penmanship.

Above all, I cherish the times I have shared with elder penmen—both men and women, for "penman" to me has always been a rather generic term without reference to gender. In this regard I pay special homage to my teachers—Paul, David, and Weldon, and an endearing note of thanks to Eileen Richardson. She has, with her husband Fred, valiantly kept the history of the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship alive for 40 years.\* I also wish to acknowledge the help of Delbert Tysdal, who graciously shared much of his research material with me, and to Jan Powell, my capable studio assistant, who illustrated the following portraits. With the help of these dedicated friends, herewith is presented the following artists who bear recognition in the Penman's Hall Of Fame. In addition, it must be stated that there were others who merit such membership as well. These accomplished penmen also rendered work of an exceptional quality. Unfortunately, no photographs of these masters were located during the research efforts conducted for this work. Consequently, although their

\*Further details about the work of the Richardsons appear at the end of this chapter.



portraits are absent from among their colleagues, their names are duly recorded.

The products of the penman's hand were not folk art in nature; they truly represent *fine art* and deserve to be so recognized. In a testimonial article honoring Fielding Schofield,\* author Horace G. Healey wrote:

... Here is a man who would have won world-wide fame with the brush or chisel. Nature quickly endowed him with great artistic talent. Had his lot been cast in a different environment or in a different age, he would, without doubt, have stamped his genius on material of far more permanent

texture than bristol board, or with instruments more generally appreciated or understood than is the steel pen. It is sad to think that the brilliant products of the skill and brain of a 'Spencer,' a 'Williams,' a 'Flickinger,' a 'Schofield,' a 'Madarasz,' must be limited to his generation, to be seen and admired by relatively few.

It has been nearly 150 years since Platt Rogers Spencer published his first book on penmanship. In the ensuing years, penmen have come and gone without fanfare, leaving for us the legacy of their art. It is time we knew who they were.

## MASTERS OF DISTINCTION

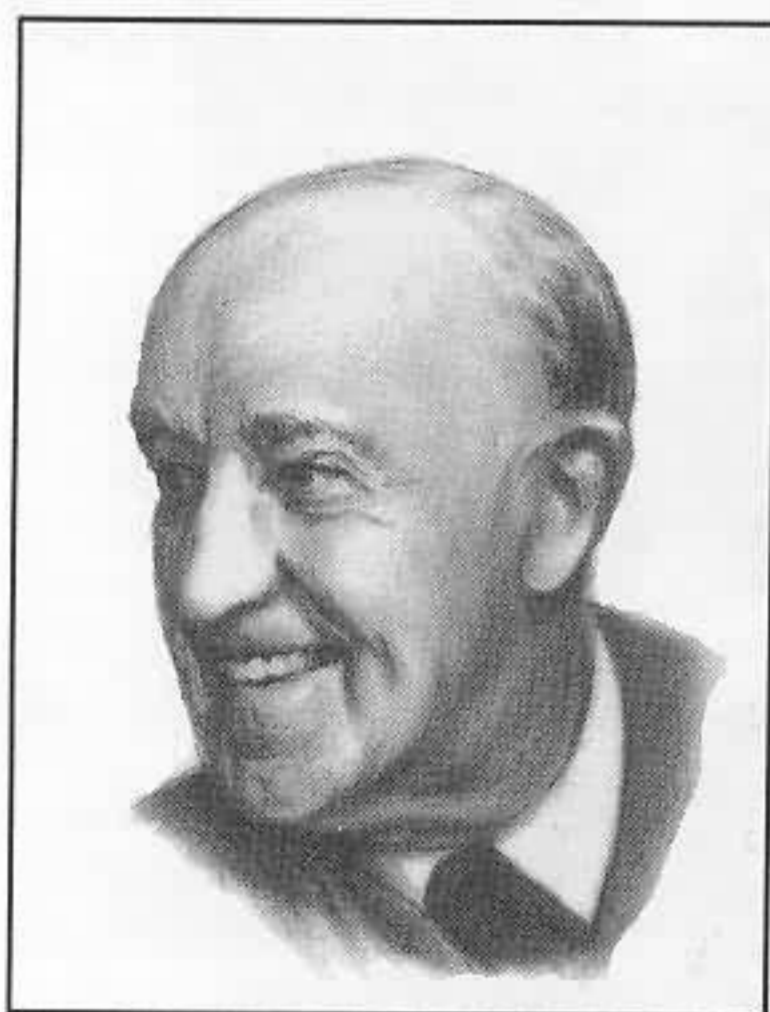
Among the ranks of Master Penmen, there were a select number of individuals whose works, when reviewed from an historical perspective, distinguished their stature above others in the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship. Some of these gifted artists were "the best" at certain styles; some the most

novel, influential, or regarded as the best teachers. One was the era's founder. Together, they represent the finest talents of an epoch in American history. Within the Penman's Hall of Fame, they are *MASTERS OF DISTINCTION*.

1. JOSEPH J. BAILEY
2. WILLIS A. BAIRD
3. SAMUEL E. BARTOW
4. HENRY P. BEHRENSMEYER
5. ELMER WARD BLOSER
6. EDWIN L. BROWN
7. CLINTON C. CANAN
8. CLINTON H. CLARK
9. PATRICK W. COSTELLO

10. FRANCIS B. COURTNEY
11. WILLIAM E. DENNIS
12. A.R. DUNTON
13. HENRY W. FLICKINGER
14. CHARLTON V. HOWE
15. LLOYD M. KELCHNER
16. EARL A. LUPFER
17. LOUIS MADARASZ
18. EDWARD C. MILLS

19. AUSTIN N. PALMER
20. FIELDING SCHOFIELD
21. LYMAN P. SPENCER
22. PLATT ROGERS SPENCER
23. FREDERICK W. TAMBLYN
24. ALBERT D. TAYLOR
25. JOHN D. WILLIAMS
26. CHARLES PAXTON ZANER



Joseph J. Bailey  
1879-1970

J. J. Bailey, Canada's most well-known penman, was Edward C. Mills' foremost student, and except for Mills, Bailey was unsurpassed by anyone in plain, rapid, business penmanship. After graduating from the Zanerian College of Penmanship in 1910, he became associated with both elementary and high school systems in the teaching of penmanship. He was author of *The Bailey Method of Penmanship* which was used in the high schools throughout Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan for over 40 years. He also wrote 3 textbooks and a teachers' manual for use in

elementary schools. One of the founding members of the International Association of Master Penmen, Engrossers and Teachers of Handwriting, J. J. Bailey was also an Honorary President of the Ontario Penmanship Association. A dedicated teacher, he significantly influenced the education of handwriting in Canada during the first half of the twentieth century. Among his many students were Frederick and Eileen Richardson.



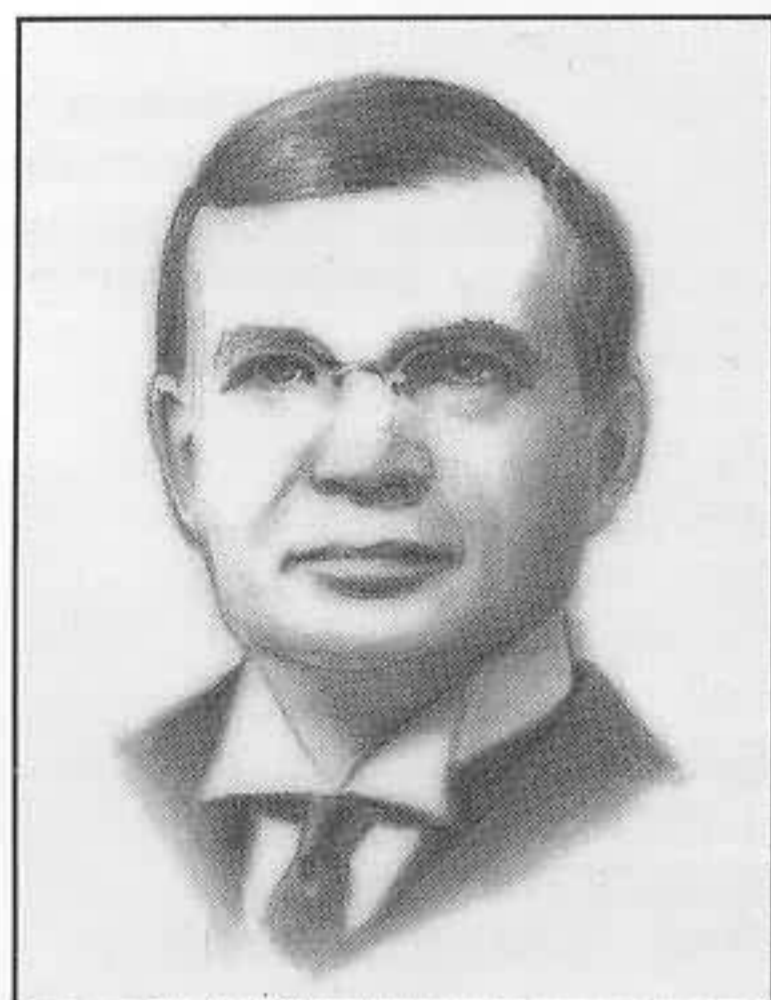
Willis A. Baird  
1882-1954

Willis A. Baird achieved a skill in engraver's script that was second to none and equal to his teacher, Charlton V. Howe. In this form of writing, both Baird and Howe gained reputations as excelling above all other penmen. Baird was born

\*The Penman's Art Journal; April 1924

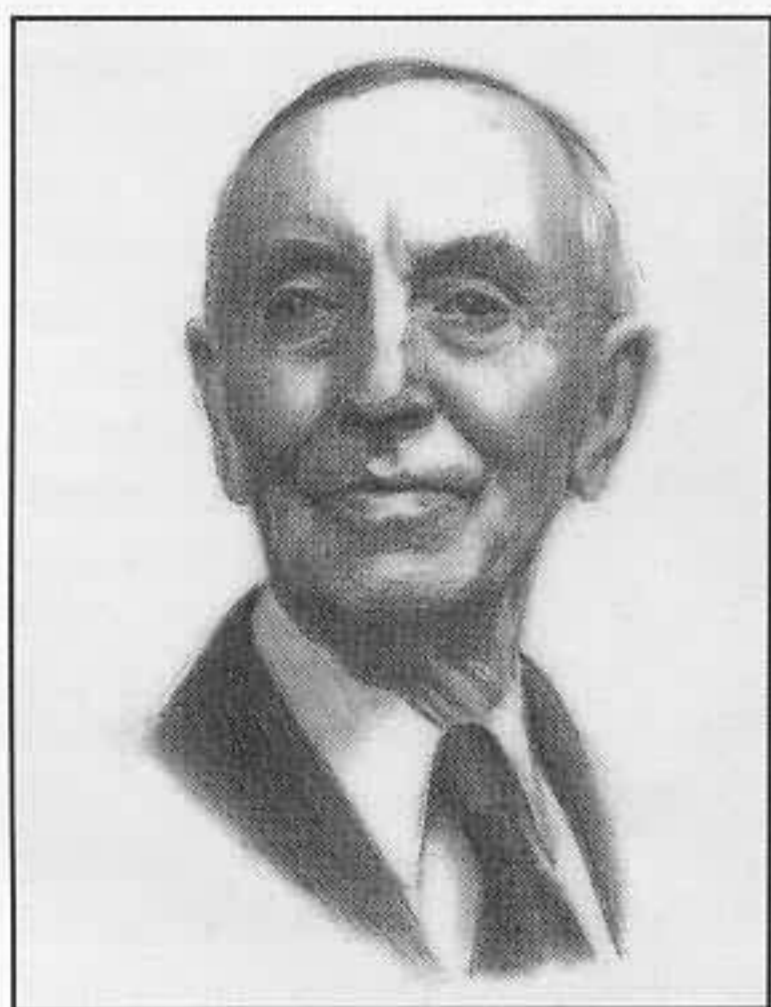


in Santa Cruz, California on November 14, 1882. He spent a summer at the Zanerian College, Columbus, Ohio in 1909, where he studied engrossing and a variety of penmanship styles under the great master penman, C. P. Zaner. Later that year he met William E. Dennis and worked for him, penning diplomas and other artwork as the job required. His skill at engrossing was of an exceptional level, and in 1914 he became a partner of Dennis. The Dennis and Baird Studio, located at 357 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, New York, became one of the most highly respected firms of its kind in the nation. Willis A. Baird died in Brooklyn, New York, on August 10, 1954, age 72 years.



**Samuel E. Bartow**  
1868-1938

Born on Christmas Day, 1868, Samuel E. Bartow was a multi-talented penman who was, for over twenty years, associated with the A. N. Palmer Company. He was one of the most widely known teachers and experts in all branches of penmanship, and was regarded as one of the finest masters of business writing in America. He served as an editor of the *American Penman* and was a principal of the Palmer Method School of Penmanship in New York. Mr. Bartow died in 1938 at the age of 70.



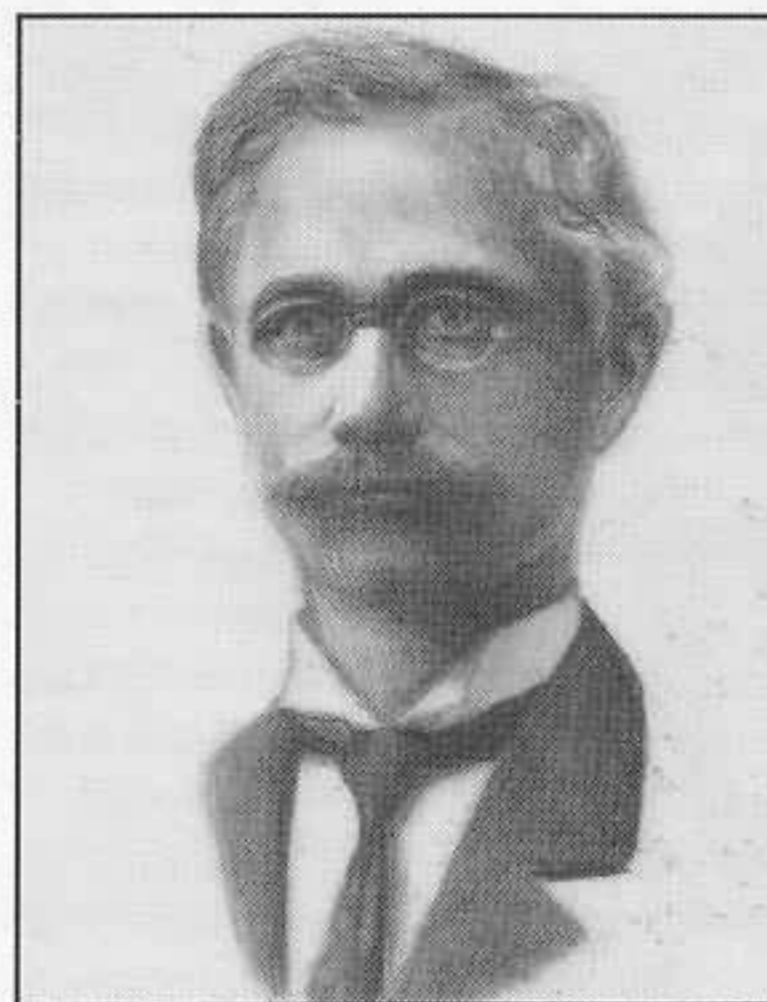
**Henry P. Behrensmeyer**  
1868-1948

One of the foremost penmen and off-hand flourishers of the early decades of this century, H. P. Behrensmeyer was widely respected by his peers. Born on February 18, 1868 near Quincy, Illinois, Mr. Behrensmeyer lived in Quincy all his

life. As a boy, he attended the Salem Parochial School and the public schools, and as a young man entered the Gem City Business College. Here he studied penmanship under C. L. Martin, Fielding Schofield, and D. L. Musselman, Sr. His interest in penmanship began, however, when he was in his teens. He studied the art at night school, and practiced during spare moments while working as a clerk in a grocery store. After graduation from high school, Behrensmeyer wrote to Mr. Musselman (founder of the Gem City Business College), inquiring about what type of ink was best for writing. Shortly thereafter, he applied to the college and was accepted as a student. Within a few months time he had made so much progress in penmanship that Mr. Musselman began to take a special interest in him. He gave Behrensmeyer a job at the college as a clerk, in which capacity the young pupil served for two years. During this time he was also given the responsibility of teaching penmanship. This work as a penmanship instructor began in September, 1886. Soon afterwards, he was placed in charge of the Penmanship Department, and continued in this role for over fifty years.

Among all of his teachers, young Behrensmeyer was most influenced by Musselman and Schofield. As a teacher, Behrensmeyer was highly regarded, not only for his great skill as a penman, but also for his kind and honest character. Thousands of students came under his influence during his years at the Gem City Business College. Among those who achieved prominence were Charlton V. Howe and Chester Cook.

Behrensmeyer's ornamental penmanship was especially delicate in nature, but his flourished birds and swans were exceptional in design and gracefulness. He died at the age of 80 on April 24, 1948 in Quincy, Illinois.



**Elmer Ward Bloser**  
1865-1929

E. W. Bloser was born on November 6, 1865, and raised on his parents' farm in Pennsylvania. As a boy he made up writing inks and sold writing supplies to neighboring children who were interested in learning how to write. At age 17 he left home and entered the Sherman Telegraph School in Oberlin, Ohio. While he was studying telegraphy he became acquainted with G. W. Michael's Pen Art Hall. He entered Michael's school on August 2, 1883, and became so skilled that within a short period of time he assumed duties as a Penmanship instructor there. The school was relocated to Delaware, Ohio, and E. W. Bloser went along as well. In 1885, he made the acquaintance of Platt R. Spencer, Jr.,



who persuaded him to become one of the instructors at the Spencerian Business College in Cleveland, Ohio. Under Mr. Spencer's tutelage he made remarkable progress in his writing and acquired great skill and accuracy in body writing. In a few years he was considered the finest page writer in the penmanship profession.

The following year, Bloser moved back to Delaware, Ohio to work for Mr. Michael. During part of that year, in 1886, C. P. Zaner also taught and worked in the school with Bloser. In 1891, Bloser purchased a third interest in the Zanerian Art College, the other two thirds belonging to C. P. Zaner (who founded the College in 1888) and Lloyd M. Kelchner, who was Zaner's cousin. Nearly a year later Kelchner left the company, and the name was changed to the Zanerian College, Zaner and Bloser Company, both partners having equal shares. After Zaner's untimely death in 1918, Bloser purchased Zaner's share and managed the business until his own death in 1929. A tireless worker and generous friend, he was referred to as a kind and gentle man and thought of with the highest regard by his colleagues.

His penmanship was among the most precise, delicate and beautiful of all his peers. As a teacher he ranked with the finest. From the labors of his and Mr. Zaner's teaching, many of the best penmen of the early twentieth-century received their start. He and Zaner were two of the most influential teachers of penmanship who ever lived.



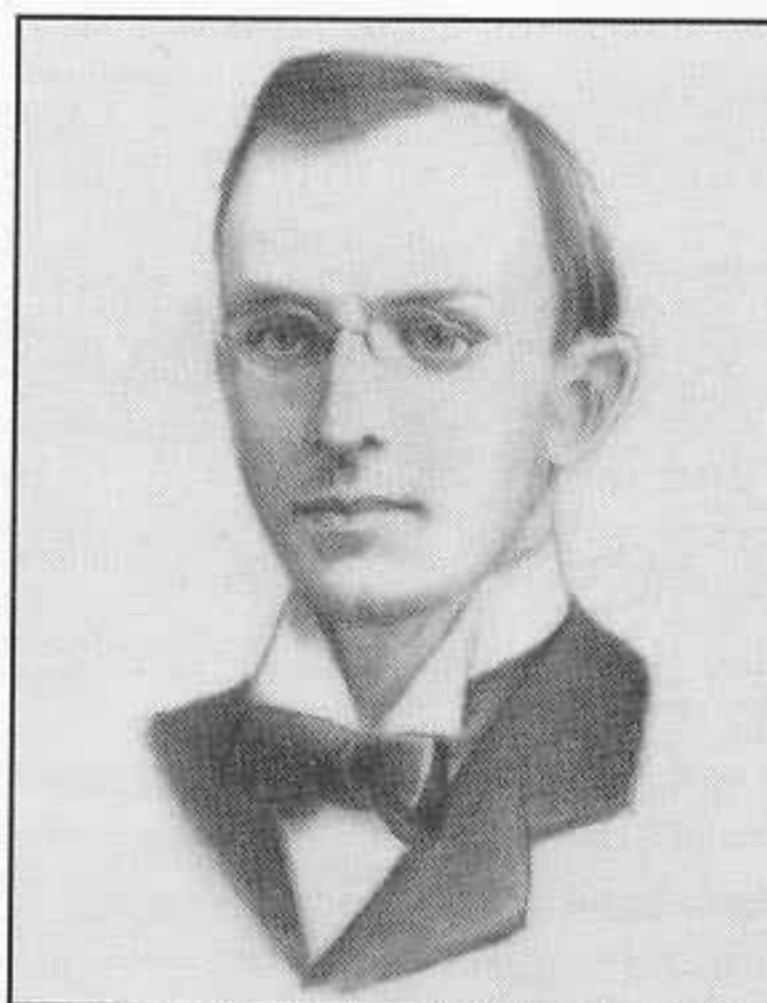
**Edwin L. Brown**  
1869-1958

Born in Camden, Maine on March 25, 1869, Brown showed great interest in handwriting as a youth. In the unfilled pages of his grandfather's old account books, on any scrap of paper and on board fences he made crude drawings and flourishes. His first real inspiration and help came from G.A. Gaskell's *Compendium of Penmanship*, which he purchased with his first dollar. He entered Rockland Commercial College, Rockland, Maine, in 1887. After graduating a year later, he returned to the college to become a teacher. Under the training of H. A. Howard, he made rapid advancement in all styles of plain and ornamental penmanship.

In 1888, he met A. R. Dunton, the famous author of the *Duntonian System of Handwriting*. Mr. Dunton was so well pleased with Brown's work and ability that he gave him instruction in more advanced penwork. Eventually, Dunton employed him to assist in engrossing the diplomas of the Boston Public Schools. During later years, he worked for a time at the Ames & Rollinson Engrossing Studio in New York

City, and travelled abroad in 1900 to study European art and design at the Paris Exposition.

In his early days as an engrosser, he made large exhibition pieces, embracing all styles of plain and ornamental penmanship. Over the years, few artists in his profession produced the volume of work he did during his lifetime. The studio partnership E. L. Brown shared with his former instructor, H. A. Howard, began advertising in the *Business Educator* penmanship magazine in 1902. This successful business relationship was an enduring one, and ended at the death of Mr. Howard in November, 1952 at the age of 89. On January 8, 1958, Edwin L. Brown passed away in Rockland, Maine. During their years together, Howard & Brown built up a thriving engrossing and designing business that covered the entire United States and Canada.



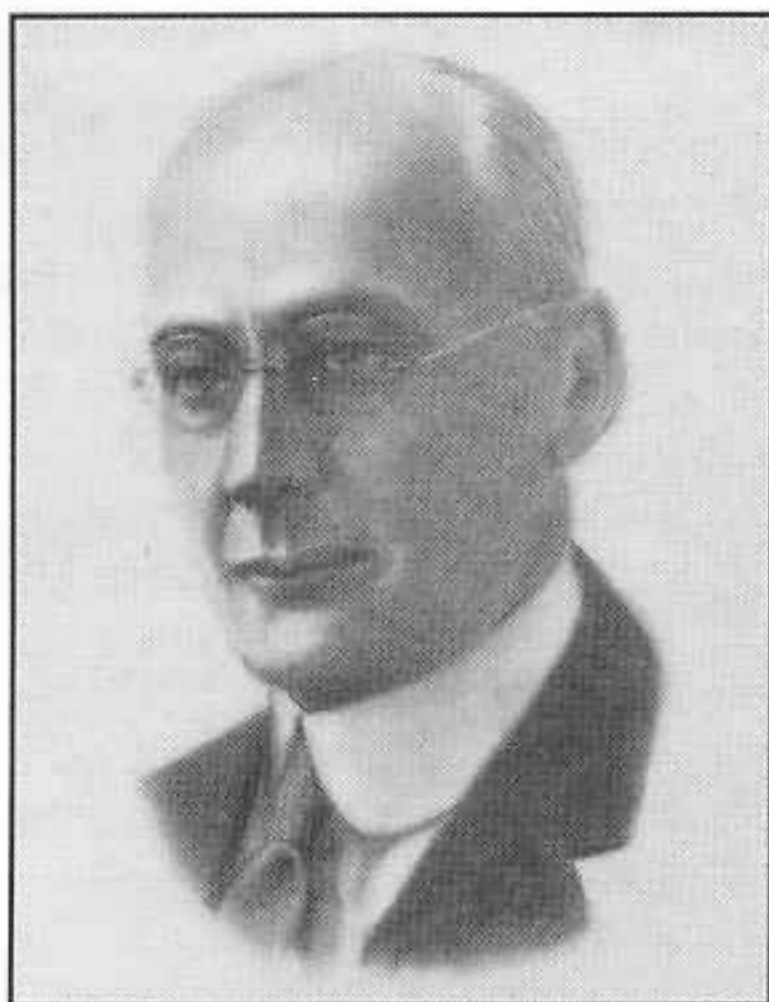
**Clinton C. Canan**  
1873-1904

C. C. Canan was born at Pleasantville, Pennsylvania on July 31, 1873. For more than fifteen years he suffered from an attack of appendicitis, which at that time was little understood and ineffectually treated. Surgical operations were performed to no avail, and he passed away in his 31st year on September 29, 1904.

Despite his frail health, as a penman he ranked with the famed A. D. Taylor. An artist of superb skill, after the death of Taylor in 1898, Canan was equaled by no living penman in delicate, accurate, free-hand ornamental penmanship. He enjoyed painting in oil and watercolors, and produced much of his best work but two years before his death. He attended the Zanerian College in 1893 at the age of twenty, and displayed an uncommon talent for penmanship. After graduating from the Zanerian, he taught penmanship in the Cleary College at Ypsilanti, Michigan, for two years, and following this he was employed to teach penmanship and pen art in the Penmanship Department of the Cedar Rapids Business School in Iowa. Later, he taught penmanship in the Shissler College at Norristown, Pennsylvania. In his instructions, he credited Platt Rogers Spencer as a man of vision and intellect who originated the letter forms and popularized shaded writing.

C. C. Canan was an invalid during the last years of his life, and it was at this time that he acquired an interest and talent for poetry. He developed such ability in this vein prior to his death, that, considering his weakened health, he surprised many friends when he published a collection of his poetry, entitled "*Thorns and Flowers*." He was always pleasant and his brief but noteworthy life was an inspiration to all.

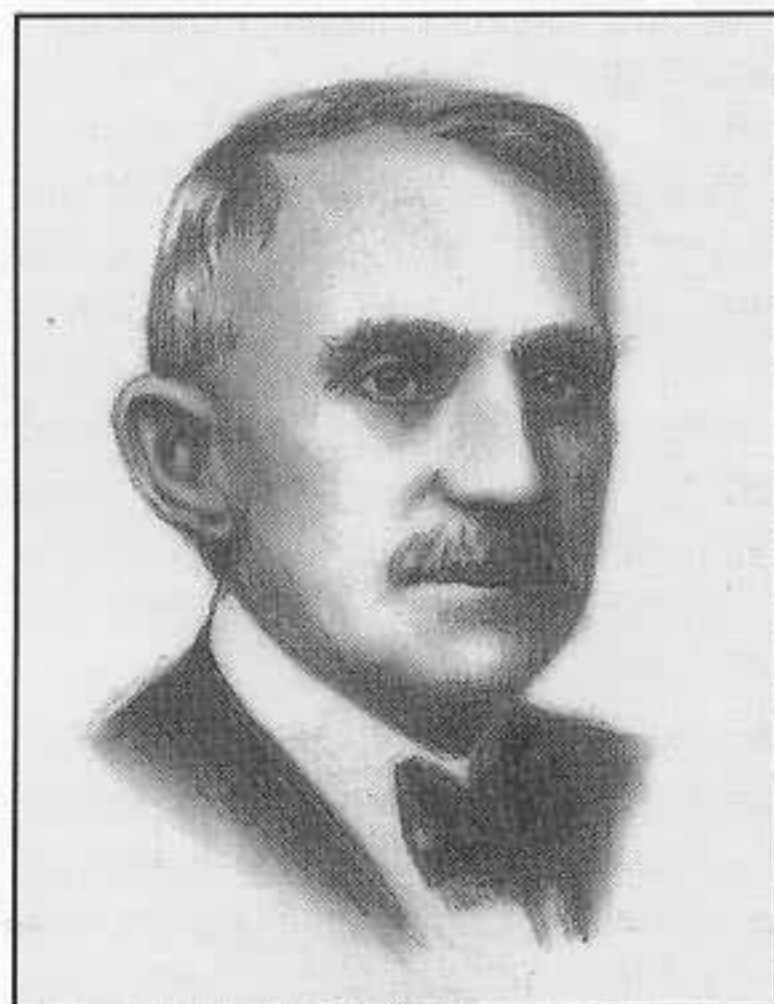




**Clinton H. Clark**  
1864–1937

Clinton H. Clark was one of those rare artists who, like Francis Courtney, seemed to have the skill to produce penmanship that bordered on the impossible. He was born in New York, April 15, 1864. When eight years old, he told his father that he intended to make his living with a pen. Through years of study and determined work, he developed into a penman of uncommon ability. He taught in business schools in San Antonio, Texas; Buffalo, New York; Hutchinson, Kansas; and Sioux City, Iowa. From 1916 until his death he was connected with Strayer's Business School in Philadelphia.

In 1893 he won first prize in a world-wide contest conducted by the *Penman's Art Journal*. In so doing, the *Journal* classed him as one of the most skillful penmen in the United States. His off-hand flourishing was on par with Fielding Schofield and John Williams not only in exquisite renderings, but in his original designs as well. He died at age 73 on June 6, 1937.

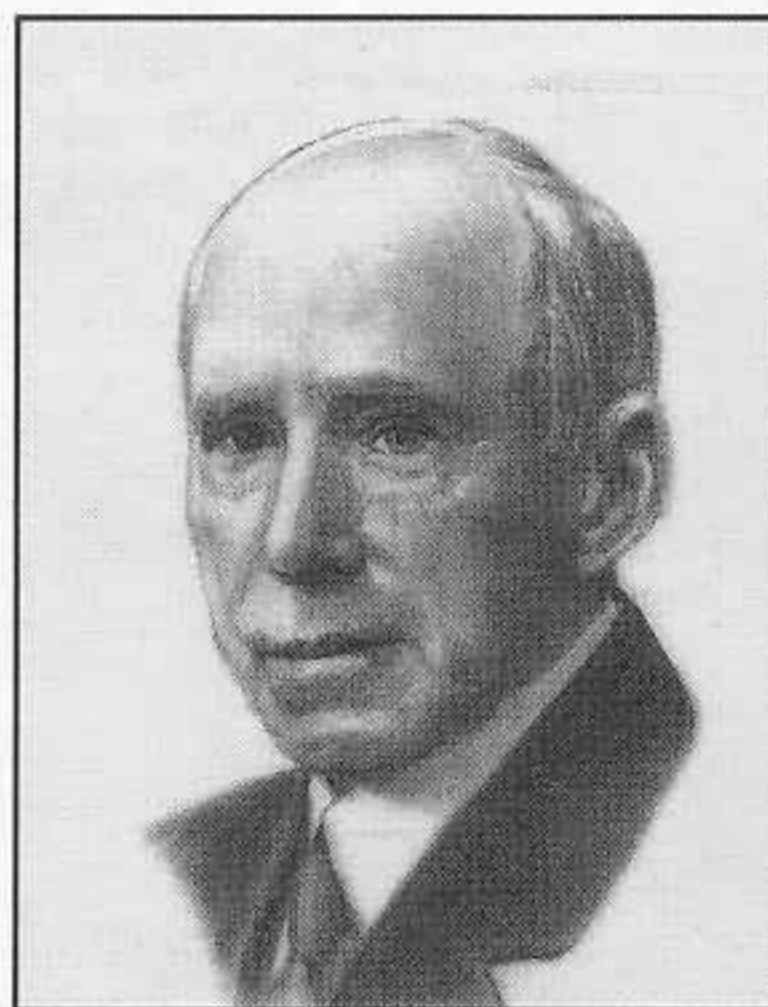


**Patrick W. Costello**  
1866–1935

Patrick William Costello was born in Minooka, Pennsylvania in 1866, an area long known as one of the major coal regions of the state. As a young boy he exhibited an interest in lettering, yet his family's poor financial situation afforded no easy schooling for him. In his youth he worked as a clerk in a grocery store and also picked slate in the coal breakers with the other young men in the community. He had no formal training in art, except for a few lessons from W. E. Dennis in 1903. However, he still practiced his lettering more as a

hobby, for within a short time, Patrick promoted himself in business by applying for—and being offered—the job as the first clerk in the City Engineering Department of Scranton, Pennsylvania. He made friends easily and enjoyed doing little engrossing jobs for his friends. These attracted the attention of professional penmen many miles away who were amazed at his work.

After working in the Department for a brief period, Costello entered local politics and served two terms as County Auditor. However, during this political portion of his life, a visitor came to see him and changed the course of the young man's career path. Costello's fame in penmanship had spread throughout the state. Charles Paxton Zaner, himself a native of the coal field region of Pennsylvania, made a special trip to see Costello and find out about his work. The great penman was astonished at Patrick's pen art, and advised him to drop out of politics and pursue a career as an engrossing artist. Costello opened up a small studio in Scranton and within a short time earned the respect and admiration of all penmen for many years. From the advice given by Zaner, a strong friendship grew between these two men that lasted the rest of their lives. Patrick W. Costello died on May 20, 1935, after being in ill health for three years. His admirable work was distinctive, often being executed only in various shades and washes of Payne's Grey or umber tones.



**Francis B. Courtney**  
1867–1952

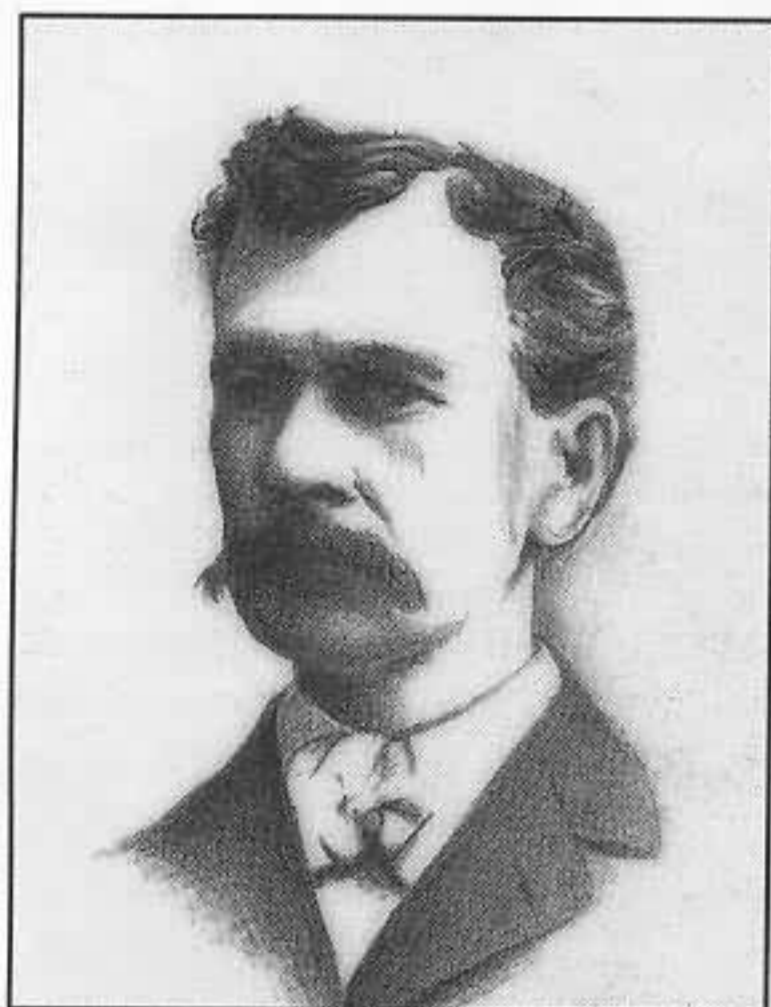
Known as "The Pen Wizard" by his peers, Francis B. Courtney was truly unique among penmen. As a student at age 17 of A. H. Hinman, the grand old master and student of P. R. Spencer, Courtney developed his passion for penmanship early in life. Shortly thereafter, he received further training in penmanship at the Spencerian Business College, Cleveland, Ohio.

His first position after graduation was as an accountant in a manufacturing company, which he held for two years. However, preferring to work in a business college environment rather than in a general office, Courtney wrote 200 single-page specimens, each line being in a different style, and sent them out to business colleges throughout the country. This brought him many job offers, and his reputation as a penman grew rapidly. Over the years, he taught at many such colleges: Hinman's College, Worcester, Massachusetts; Portland, Maine Business College; Lincoln, Nebraska Business College; Spaulding's Commercial College, Kansas City, Missouri; McDonald Business College, Des Moines, Iowa;



Caton's Commercial College, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Wood's School of Business, New York; Cedar Rapids Business College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and Toland's Business University. He was one of the most consistent contributors to the *Penman's Art Journal*, the *American Penman* and the *Business Educator*, and was very prolific in his personal correspondence with his friends and colleagues.

No other penman was so versatile in various writing styles as Francis B. Courtney. He was most flamboyant in the penmanship demonstrations he gave, and he exhibited his prowess with the pen often. He seemed to revel in dashing out exotic and novel forms of decorative writing, a number of which were of his own creation. His Needlestitch script, Courtney's Backslanted script, Figure Writing, and Letterheads became trademarks for this great penman. Throughout his long life, he was an avid teacher, and influenced many young writers with his flawless work. He died at 85 years of age in 1952.



**William E. Dennis**  
1860–1924

Among the ranks of penmen, there were few indeed who earned the respect and admiration of his peers to a greater degree than William E. Dennis. As a man beloved by the members of his profession, he rates with E. W. Bloser, C. P. Zaner and even P. R. Spencer. As a skilled penman in every field of penmanship and pen art, he ranked above them all. In the eyes of his contemporaries and those penmen who followed after his death, he was often regarded as the finest all-around penman who ever lived. To this day, his work remains unchallenged and undoubtedly will remain so.

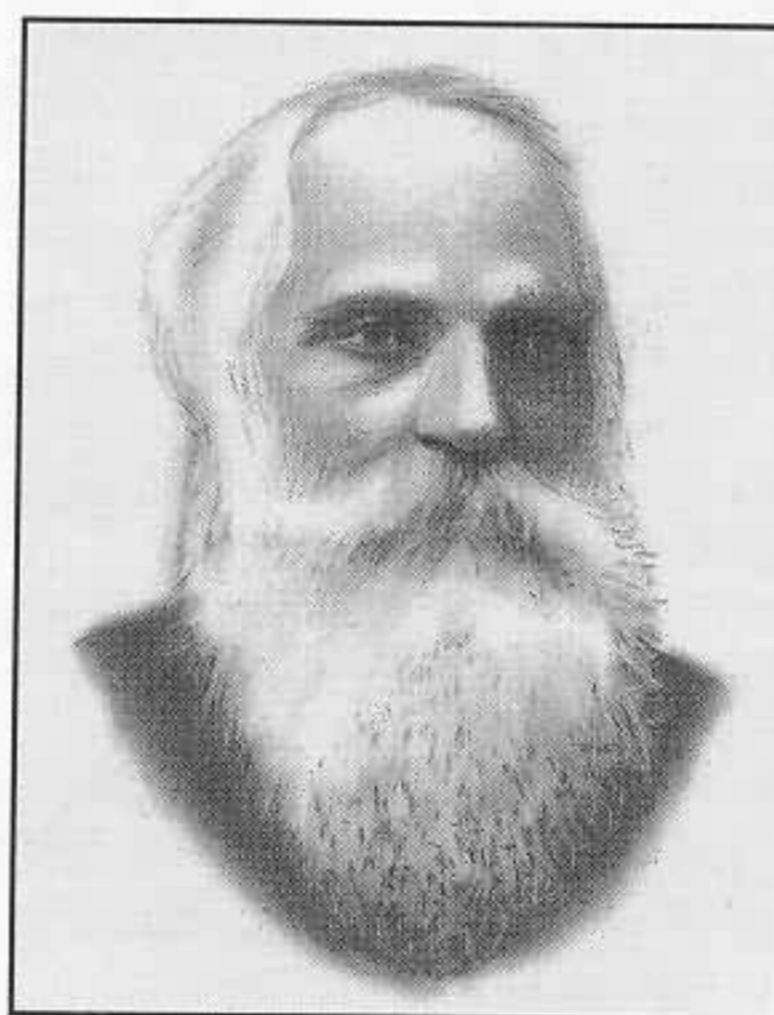
Born in Manchester, New Hampshire in 1860, Dennis' interest in penmanship started in 1875 at the age of 15 when he secured a copy of *Gaskell's Compendium of Penmanship*. He studied the plates in the text and sent his lessons to Gaskell for critique. Two years later he enrolled in Gaskell's school and was widely promoted by the great penman as "Gaskell's boy wonder." It was at that institution where Dennis made friends with his new classmate A. N. Palmer, a treasured association that lasted through both men's lifetimes.

While a young man in his twenties, Dennis tried several lines of work as a clerk, but found them too boring for his taste. He decorated the ledger books in his charge with fancy birds and scrolls, but it seems that this did little to impress his employers, for he was fired from no less than three jobs! His fortunes changed and his career path became guided

when shortly thereafter he met A. R. Dunton—one of the most skilled penmen of the 19th century. Under Dunton's guidance, Dennis learned much *practical* use for his pen, as well as many advanced techniques of penmanship.

During his career as a penman and engrosser, W. E. Dennis was known as an expert of the highest caliber in all forms of ornamental penmanship, shaded "display" scripts, and text lettering. He was considered a genius at off-hand flourishing, and was acclaimed as "America's Dean of Engrossing." In 1909 he met Mr. Willis Baird, and in 1914 the two men formed a partnership in Brooklyn, New York. It was also in that same year that the *American Penman* published a superb collection of ornamental penmanship by Dennis entitled "*Studies In Pen Art*," copies of which were eagerly sought by penmen of his day and are prized by collectors today.

For many years until his death, William E. Dennis maintained his studio in Brooklyn and produced work of superlative quality. His death at age 64 on June 6, 1924 was a shock to the penmanship profession. A slightly-built man of 5'6" and 135 pounds, his passing resulted from pneumonia after an illness of only three days. Numerous Master Penmen eulogized him, but perhaps none better than his dear friend Samuel E. Bartow: "*Dennis was to the penmanship profession what such painters as Whistler, Sargent and DaVinci were to the art world. His book known as 'Studies in Pen Art' forms one of the most enduring monuments to that Greatest of Great all-around penman, W. E. Dennis.*"



**A. R. Dunton**  
1812–1892

One of the most skilled and widely known penman of his time was A. R. Dunton, who was born at Hope, Maine in 1812 and died in Camden, Maine at the age of 80. He exhibited a love for penmanship at an early age. When he was but 13, he showed such skill in writing that his teacher had him write the copies and make quill pens for his school.

Beginning at the age of 20 he conducted his first writing school at Hales Mills, Massachusetts, and thereafter he taught penmanship in nearly every state in the Union. He held writing academies in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and New Orleans. For a number of years he issued a challenge to the world as a penman. In 1840, a penman from England by the name of Mr. Barstow came to compete with Dunton at the Boston Mechanics' Fair. Barstow claimed that Dunton's specimens were engraved, and that no living pen-



man could do such work with a pen. The Master Penman William E. Dennis, who was a student of Dunton's and lived with his mentor for some time in his younger days, recalled this incident in a 1914 edition of the *Business Educator*: "This gave Dunton an opportunity to say something emphatic, and being as proficient in profanity as in penmanship said 'By G-, I'll show you that can be done with a pen.' So he stamped the floor, did some more hard swearing, then got his implements together and in a short time produced a sample of his skill fully equal to the disputed specimens. Dunton convinced the judges and won the medal."

In 1841, Mr. Dunton wrote fifty calling cards for the English author, Mr. Charles Dickens, who happened to be in Boston at the time. Upon each card was the author's name—and each card was written in a different style. Dickens was duly impressed upon his receipt of the cards, and was most appreciative to Dunton.

While teaching in New Orleans in 1842, Mr. Dunton conducted a writing academy assisted by his brother, who he had trained as a penman and teacher. It was there that the penman published his first copybooks. His brother returned to Boston, and in connection with J. W. Payson, a former pupil of A. R. Dunton, they reproduced, copyrighted and published a series of A. R. Dunton's copybooks for their use in teaching. These books were published in 1848—at least four years before P. R. Spencer published his in Ohio. Dunton's books, being the first in the East, became so popular that they were widely sought, and used by many public and private schools throughout the eastern portion of the country. Later, W. M. Scribner, another A. R. Dunton pupil, united with the other two men and published *Payson, Dunton and Scribner's Copy Books*. These, too, became popular. A. R. Dunton, upon returning from New Orleans to Philadelphia, published a lithographed system of Duntonian Writing, but the publishing company failed to market the book to any great extent. As a result, there were limited sales.\*

Aside from his success as a teacher in a classroom setting, it was said that "In his time (contemporary with P. R. Spencer's) no other penman in the east or south made more successful pen artists, or was his equal as a teacher and skilled penman." This statement was written in 1903 by A. H. Hinman—one of Spencer's most successful students.\*\* Hinman further states: "His skill was unlike the bold, free writing and flourishing of Spencer and Williams in the West."

\*It is interesting to note that for many years afterwards, Dunton claimed that Platt Rogers Spencer had copied his style, and that true credit for America's style of penmanship should go to him instead of Spencer. In actuality, the styles, although similar, differed in that Spencer's initial forms were somewhat more crude, or rough, than Dunton's. Each man developed his style individually. Spencer was very charismatic as a teacher, a humanitarian, and as an educator. He also had five sons who energetically marketed the Spencerian method of writing through the business colleges they were associated with as well as through the massive chain of Bryant & Stratton Business Colleges. Spencer was a much more public figure than Dunton. In addition, there is ample evidence of Spencer's progress as he developed his style—from his early trials with letterform, angle and shade, to his perfected style of the early 1850's when he began teaching at the Jericho log seminary. The caliber of Dunton's work was actually of a higher artistic nature than Spencer's. Indeed, one may surmise that to a significant extent, not the actual penmanship style, but rather, the marketing system of each penman is what shaped the destiny of their writing systems.

\*\**Business Educator*, May 1903

*His work in script, in pen drawing and lettering was equal to the finest engraving . . ."*

Like Spencer, A. R. Dunton became a sort of "folk hero" over the years. Besides his penmanship skills, he was an accomplished slight-of-hand artist, and used to entertain many of his colleagues at various functions. A dedicated and gifted man, A. R. Dunton was highly regarded by many in the penmanship profession, and especially in his home state of Maine, was considered an historic pioneer in Education.



Henry W. Flickinger  
1845–1925

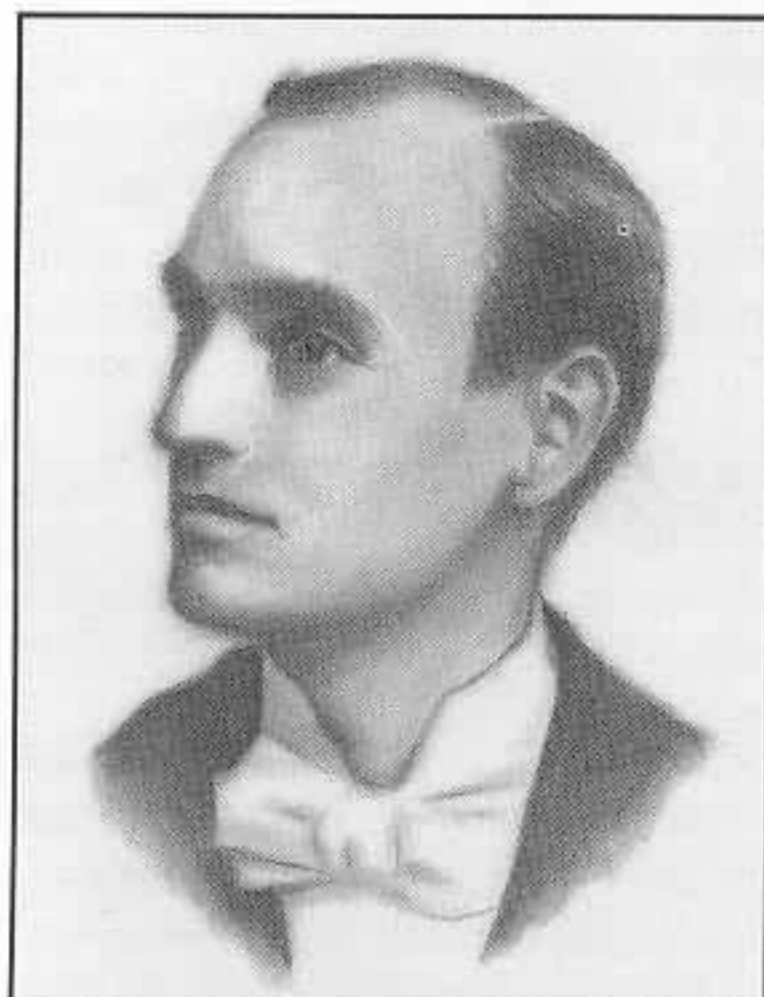
Henry W. Flickinger was born August 30, 1845 in Ickesburg, Pennsylvania. At age nineteen he enlisted in a drum corps during the Civil War. When the war ended he entered Eastman's Business College in Poughkeepsie, New York where he received training in lettering, penmanship, and flourishing. He became Professor of the Pen Drawing Department of this College in 1866. During this time he was able to obtain some specimens of off-hand flourishing by the great John D. Williams, which inspired Flickinger to master his own hand at this art. The next year he taught penmanship at the Crittenden Business College in Philadelphia.

The year 1870 became a significant milestone in this penman's career, as he joined brothers Henry C. and Lyman P. Spencer in Washington, D. C. Lyman was considered the finest living penman at that time, and while Flickinger assisted the two men in the revision of the Spencerian Copy books, his own penmanship improved to such a degree that it equalled Lyman's. The following year he went back to Philadelphia to teach, and for several years afterwards Flickinger's penwork was in great demand by societies for engrossed resolutions and by numerous business colleges wanting exhibition pieces for display. In 1875 he again went to Washington to assist the Spencers in the preparation of several large pieces for display at the Centennial Exhibition to be held in Philadelphia the following year. Of these pieces was one that became known as the finest example of script and pen drawing in the world: a copy of the Declaration of Independence. It was penned by both Flickinger and Lyman Spencer. During the ensuing years, Henry W. Flickinger prepared revisions for three other sets of copybooks, and was recalled by the Spencers yet again for a special project—preparing to publish the *New Spencerian Compendium of Penmanship*. Flickinger and Lyman Spencer wrote all the models for the numerous plates for this historic manual.

For many years afterwards, Flickinger did much engrossing



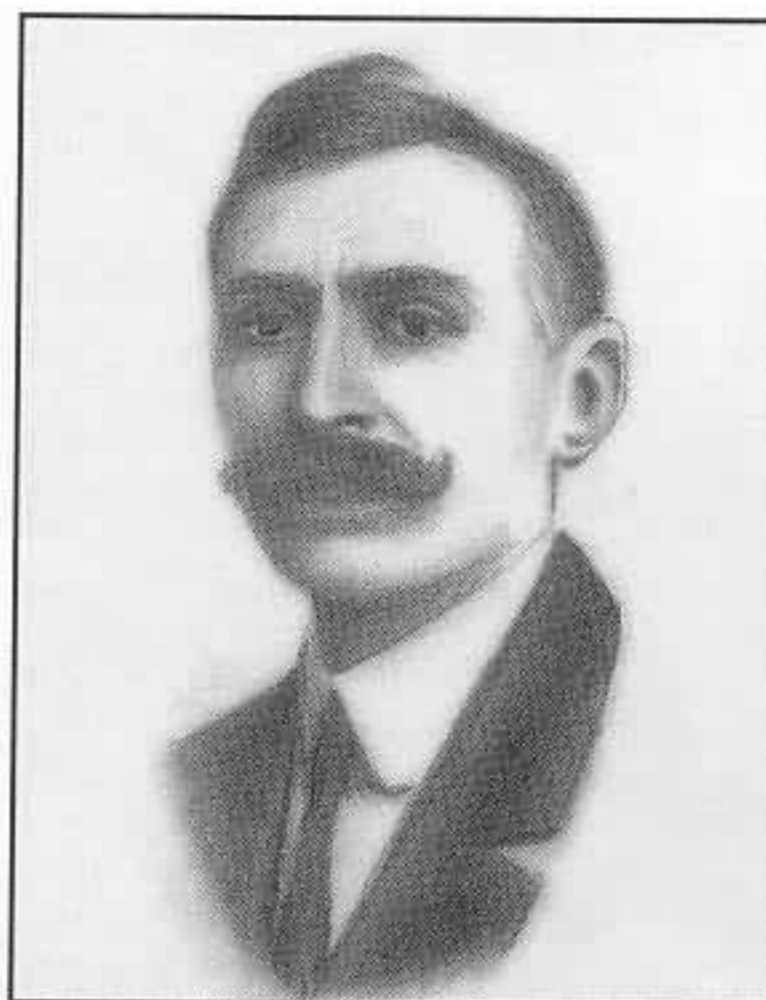
work and also taught at a number of business colleges in Pennsylvania. His conception of form and skill in execution were widely respected by his peers, and among those master penmen whose works became legendary, it was said that in the *pure* Spencerian, characterized by its chaste and elegant forms, grace, and proportions, Henry W. Flickinger and Lyman Spencer each displayed a skill that was probably never attained by any other penman. Louis Madarasz considered Flickinger to be the best penman of the 19th century.



**Charlton V. Howe**  
1870-1952

Charlton Valentine Howe, who shared with Willis Baird the distinction of possessing the highest degree of skill in engraver's script above all other penmen, was born on February 14, 1870 in LaGrange, Missouri. When he was seven years old his father engaged an itinerant writing teacher to begin schooling the young boy in penmanship. At the age of 17, he worked as a clerk for a railroad company, a job that he secured due to his good penmanship. Two years later he became a clerk for a lumber company, but determined that in order to find more lucrative employment, he needed to further his education in business skills. With this objective in mind he decided to attend the Gem City Business College in Quincy, Illinois. He entered as a student in 1892 and studied penmanship under master penman H. P. Behrensmeyer. After graduation, he went to Chicago the following year to attend the World's Fair and to seek employment. He was soon offered a position as a clerk in another railroad company, and 6 months later advanced himself with a better position working for a wholesale jewelry store. He remained in this job for 6 months when he took a course in Engraver's Script from I. W. Pierson with the thought of preparing himself for a position as a policy engrosser. After this he worked at several other companies, and in the summer of 1899 he became associated with Chicago's leading engrosser, M. C. L. Ricketts. In this situation he assisted by engrossing numerous diplomas, and learned much about the various Engrossing techniques used by the masters.

Throughout his long life, Howe continued to work in a clerk's capacity, while he also taught and wrote numerous lessons on Engraver's Script for the *American Penman* and *The Business Educator*. He was introduced to his bride-to-be by C. P. Zaner, and the couple was married in Mr. Zaner's home on April 12, 1902.



**Lloyd M. Kelchner**  
1862-1948

One of the finest all-around penmen who ever took pen to ink, Lloyd Kelchner's work in ornamental penmanship, pen art illustration and off-hand flourishing served as an inspiration to thousands of individuals for 60 years. Well into his eighties, he continued to produce exquisite work.

Born in Light Street, Pennsylvania, Mr. Kelchner's skills in writing were developed while attending G. W. Michael's Pen Art Hall in Oberlin, Ohio in the early 1880's. It was in 1883 that he met C. P. Zaner and E. W. Bloser, fellow students with Kelchner at Michael's school. Four years later, Kelchner and Bloser secured positions and taught in Delaware, Ohio, and later, both men worked at the Euclid Avenue Business College in Cleveland. A strong friendship grew between these men and Zaner that lasted their lifetimes.

In 1889, Lloyd Kelchner purchased a half interest in the Zanerian College of Penmanship in Columbus, Ohio which had been established the year before by Mr. Zaner. In 1891, Mr. Bloser came to Columbus and purchased a third interest in the Zanerian. The partnership ran for almost a year when Kelchner sold his interest and left for Dixon, Illinois to teach in the Northern Illinois Normal College. He then accepted a teaching position at the Highland Park College in Des Moines, Iowa.

The year 1909 is recorded as the point in Kelchner's career when he moved to Seattle, Washington and became a teacher in the Seattle Business College. He remained in Seattle the rest of his life. Over the years he taught thousands of students, engrossed countless resolutions, and lettered the names on many thousands of diplomas. He contributed articles, lessons, and samples of his own work to various penmanship magazines, particularly the *Business Educator*, for several decades, and was particularly known for his unique style of bird flourishing. Each year for over 40 years he made a tradition of designing his own Christmas cards. These colorful cards featured beautiful penmanship and dramatic bird flourishes, and were prized by his friends and associates.

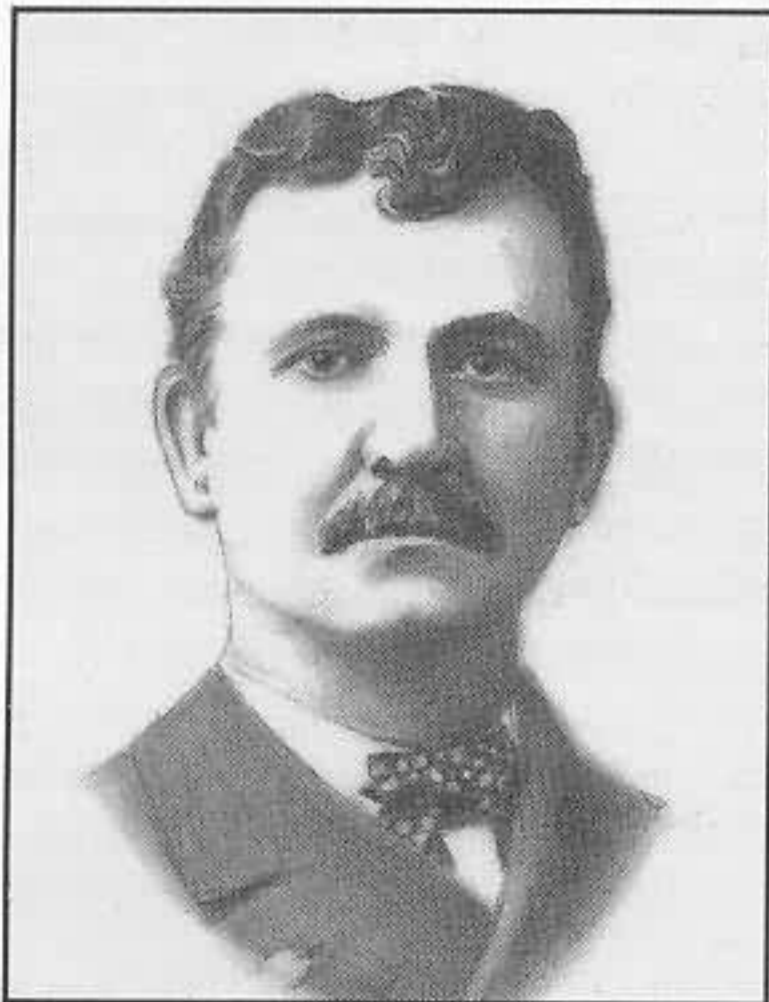
Lloyd Kelchner kept in close contact with the penmanship profession, maintaining strong friendships and earning the respect of penmen everywhere. He passed away after a short illness on July 5, 1948.





**Earl A. Lupfer**  
1890–1974

Born in Irvona, Pennsylvania, Earl Lupfer spent nearly his entire working career at the Zanerian College of Penmanship. He studied at the Zanerian as a pupil in 1908–1909. His skill at ornamental penmanship was far above his fellow pupils, and Mr. Zaner took a special interest in furthering young Lupfer's talents. Within a few years Mr. Lupfer's abilities were exemplary, and Zaner offered him a faculty position at the College. There he worked into the 1950's, teaching countless men and women through the years. A tall, lanky man, Earl Lupfer was an inspirational teacher. He became the last principal of the Zanerian College, working with Parker Zaner Bloser, the son of E. W. Bloser, in the late 1950's. Although there were many highly skilled penmen who taught at the Zanerian, it is thought that none had a longer teaching tenure or contributed articles for *The Business Educator* over a longer period of time than did Mr. Lupfer. He was the most enduring classroom teacher of penmanship in the 20th century.



**Louis Madarasz**  
1860–1910

The man who, above all others, is universally regarded as the most highly-skilled ornamental penman that ever lived, Louis Madarasz, was born January 20, 1860. He obtained a copy of *Gaskell's Compendium of Penmanship* when he was in his teens. Studying the text by himself, he achieved a degree of skill in ornamental writing that was remarkable for one so young. Such self-discipline and persistence were instrumental in Madarasz's desire to master the art of penmanship.

In the late 1870's he enrolled as a student at the Rochester Business University in Rochester, New York. While attending this institution, his facility with the pen earned him a reputation throughout the state. During the years that followed, Madarasz took on penmanship positions at a number of institutions. His wanderings eventually led him to Manchester, New Hampshire—the location of Gaskell's penmanship school. Besides being an accomplished master penman, Gaskell was also a businessman who recognized advertising opportunities. Madarasz, whose fame as a penman was fairly widespread by this time, also recognized the opportunity to further his own skills by being associated with Gaskell. It was a good association for both men, and soon the famous signature of Madarasz appeared on the advertisements for Gaskell's *Compendium*. Madarasz stayed with Gaskell for several years, learning much about advertising and the business of mail order.

As time went by, Madarasz again moved from one institution and town to another. He seemed to have a restless spirit in this regard, and seldom stayed anywhere longer than a few years. He worked in Sterling, Illinois; Jersey City, New Jersey; and Poughkeepsie, New York.

Regarding his social interests, he enjoyed chess and other board games, and was quite skilled at playing them. He also enjoyed the theater, not only as a spectator, but as an actor. He once studied under a professional thespian and even had a part in a stage performance. This interest was, however, only temporary in the penman's life and he soon went back to his love and profession of penmanship with greater zeal than ever before.

Over the years, Madarasz never tired of travelling, working and teaching. He had incredible energy to devote to penmanship, and the quality of his work never faltered. His speed of execution was reputed to be faster than any penman, before or since. His style was unique—a dramatic, rather heavily shaded variety of ornamental writing. It has been said that Madarasz's penmanship style was copied by more penmen than that of any other. In 1908–1909, Madarasz involved himself in a most ambitious project to earn money. He purchased large, new scrapbooks of two hundred pages each. He then filled each page of the books with his own penmanship. To do this he copied his own business letters, correspondence, writing lessons and display writing and pasted them, one by one, upon each page. He advertised them as the Madarasz Scrapbooks, and sold them for \$45; \$25 to be paid as a deposit, and then \$5 per month on the balance. In all he sold perhaps a dozen such books. Only one of these is known to be in existence today, and much of it has been reproduced in Volume Two of this text.

The last few years of Madarasz's life were spent in a business association in Goldfield, Nevada. It was there that health problems began to plague the penman. After a severe bout with pneumonia, Madarasz became diabetic and never regained his formally healthy physique. Quoting from *The Secret Of The Skill Of Madarasz*, a book published by the Zaner Bloser Company in 1911 as a tribute to the great penman: "He passed away quietly on December 23, 1910, having on the day he was stricken written a Christmas greeting in that beautiful clean-cut style of penmanship which has been copied by so many thousand aspirants during the past thirty years. At his request his body was cremated. His ashes



rest in the beautiful Columbarium at Fresh Pond, Long Island. His epitaph reads:

'In memory of a brave and gentle man whose love of Truth and Justice made him an Inspiration to all who knew him. He put his house in order; his work was done.' "



**Edward C. Mills**  
1872-1962

As Louis Madarasz was the acknowledged master of Ornamental Penmanship, E. C. Mills was the undisputed master of Business Writing. As Madarasz was first inspired by *Gaskell's Compendium of Penmanship*, so, too, was Mills. At the age of fifteen, he entered the Denver Business College, where he was to address circulars, help with the business correspondence, and partake in a business course. After a couple of years, he travelled back to his home state of Illinois and taught school classes for five years. The Williams & Rogers Company in Rochester, New York hired him in 1896 to prepare script for their publications. Mills did this for several years, until the company was sold to the American Book Company. After this, Mills decided to go into business for himself, and conducted numerous correspondence courses, performed commercial penmanship services and became the director of the penmanship programs of the parochial schools in Rochester, New York. He had many successful students, and several of these students later taught numerous students of their own. Some of the master penman who were considered to be either first or second-generation students of Mills were Joseph J. Bailey, Alva Wonnell, and Paul O'Hara, among many others. Mills constantly advertised his courses in *The Business Educator* and *American Penman* magazines, and in fifty years of service as a penman, he set the standards by which business writing was judged.



**Austin Norman Palmer**  
1860-1927

When considering the entire line of penmen throughout America's Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship, the one individual who was the most successful from a financial standpoint was A. N. Palmer. More noteworthy, however, was that Palmer also became *the most significant* penman of the 20th century. He was a disciplined teacher who loved his work, and possessed an enormous amount of energy that he focused upon his many projects.

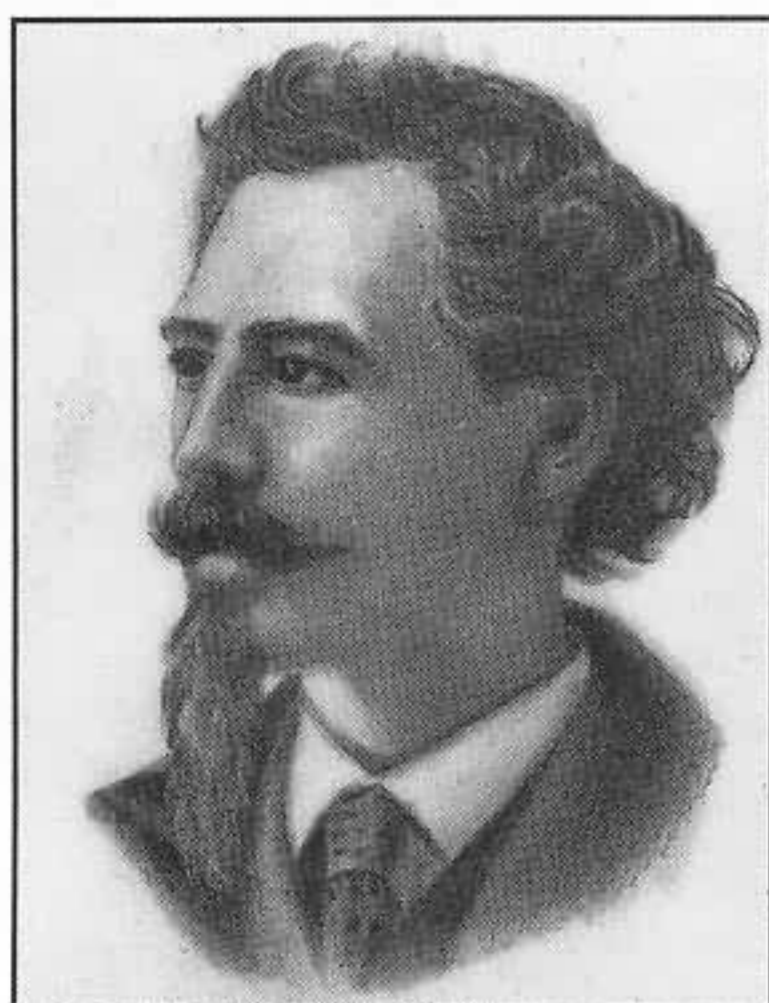
As a portion of this chapter is devoted to the history of Palmer, for the purpose of this inclusion we need only to reiterate the main points in Palmer's life.

While yet in his teens, Palmer was enrolled in Gaskell's Business College in Manchester, New Hampshire. It was here that he became acquainted with William E. Dennis and Louis Madarasz. After his graduation from Gaskell's College, Palmer set out to earn his living with his pen. He worked his way west through Rockville, Indiana; St. Joseph, Missouri; and finally, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. While working at a railroad company in Cedar Rapids, Palmer noticed that the more experienced penmen wrote without whole-arm movement. Instead, both arms were resting on the paper, and the hand was controlled by *muscular movement*, with the hand balancing on the forearm muscle. This was a great reformation of the older *whole arm movement* method, and was much easier to write than the shaded Spencerian.

Shortly thereafter, Palmer developed his own copy book system, founded the A. N. Palmer Company, and personally conducted many training sessions for school teachers. His alphabet—boasting no shades—was easier to write (especially for children), and was far more legible to read than the shaded styles were. After an exhibition held in St. Louis in 1905 commemorating the centennial of the Louisiana Purchase, Palmer's methods of handwriting instruction were used throughout the country. Today, more than 80 years later, Palmer-method writing is still used by many educational systems in America.

A talented penman, author, publisher, and businessman, A. N. Palmer expanded his company, but never lost sight of his role as a teacher. To this end he remained devoted. He died on November 16, 1927, approximately one month prior to his 67th birthday.

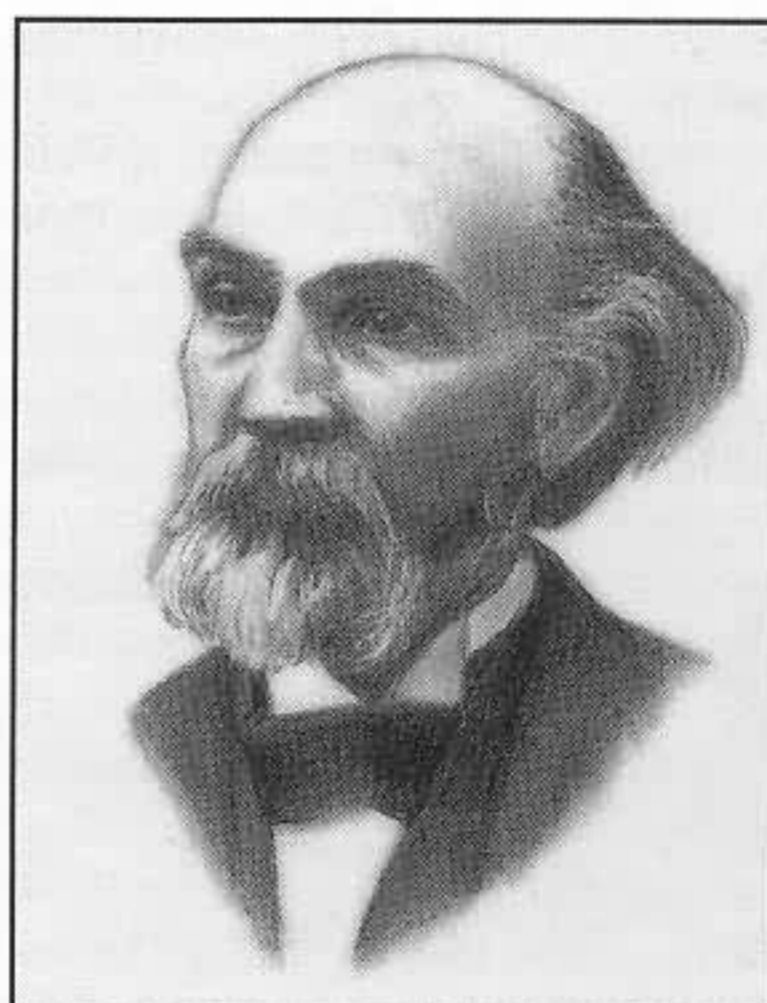




Fielding Schofield  
1845-1924

One of the greatest off-hand flourishing artists of the era was Fielding Schofield. He had his peers in William E. Dennis, Clinton H. Clark, and John Williams, but none were better. He was born at Poughkeepsie, New York on January 17, 1845. It appears that Fielding inherited his artistic nature from his father, who by profession was a designer of patterns for carpets and tapestries.

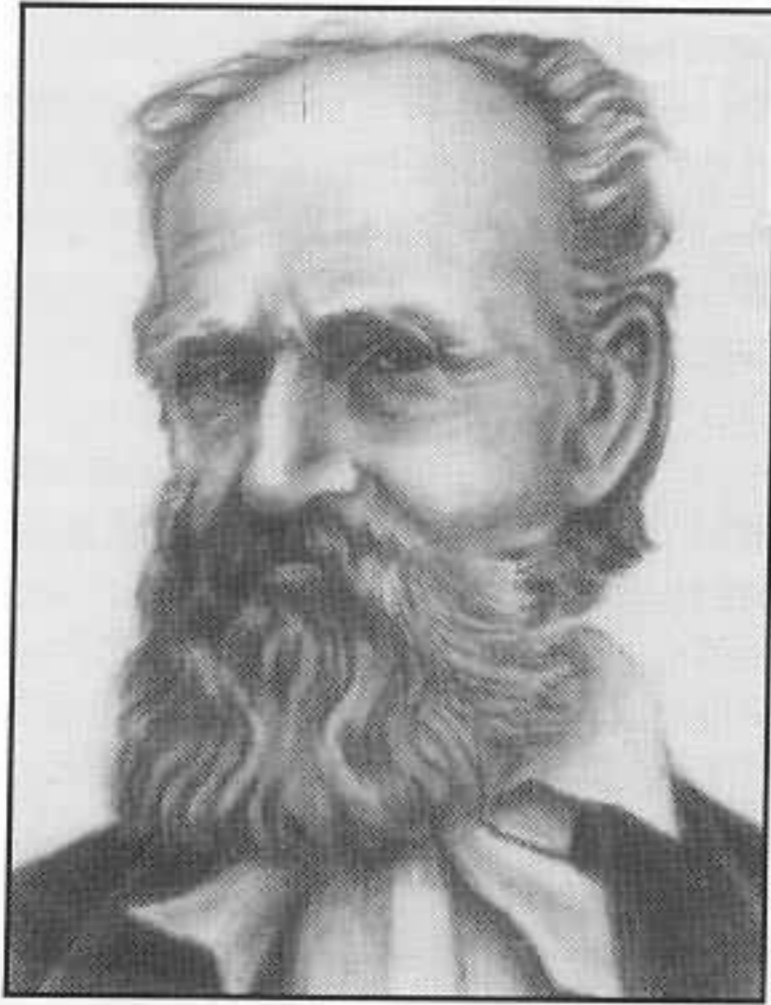
Fielding Schofield spent his youth working at various jobs: newsboy, errand-boy, and a worker in a chair factory. In his later teens, he secured a janitor's position at the famous penmanship and business institution, Eastman College. By diligent work, study and practice, he was promoted quickly to advertising agent for the college, then assistant secretary, correspondent, and finally, instructor in penmanship. At age 21 he moved to Chicago to work with H. B. Bryant, staying for 2 years. He returned east in 1867 and worked in business education for 10 years at Warner's Polytechnic Institute in Providence, Rhode Island. In 1877, he moved once again, this time to Newark, New Jersey, where he taught penmanship for 5 years at the Coleman School. The year 1883 found Schofield joining his former classmate, D. L. Musselman, at the Gem City Business College in Quincy, Illinois. Here he was to remain for eight seasons, and it was during this portion of his life that Fielding Schofield reached the pinnacle of his skill as a penman. From 1883 to 1890 no one in the ranks of penmen surpassed him in skill or ability to produce original designs. In 1891 he joined Mr. E. P. Herald in San Francisco. Shortly thereafter he moved back to the East. He did some teaching, first in Utica, New York for three years, and then in several evening schools in Boston. His health began to fail in his retirement years, and he passed away at the age of 79, an undisputed master of the pen.



Lyman P. Spencer  
1840-1915

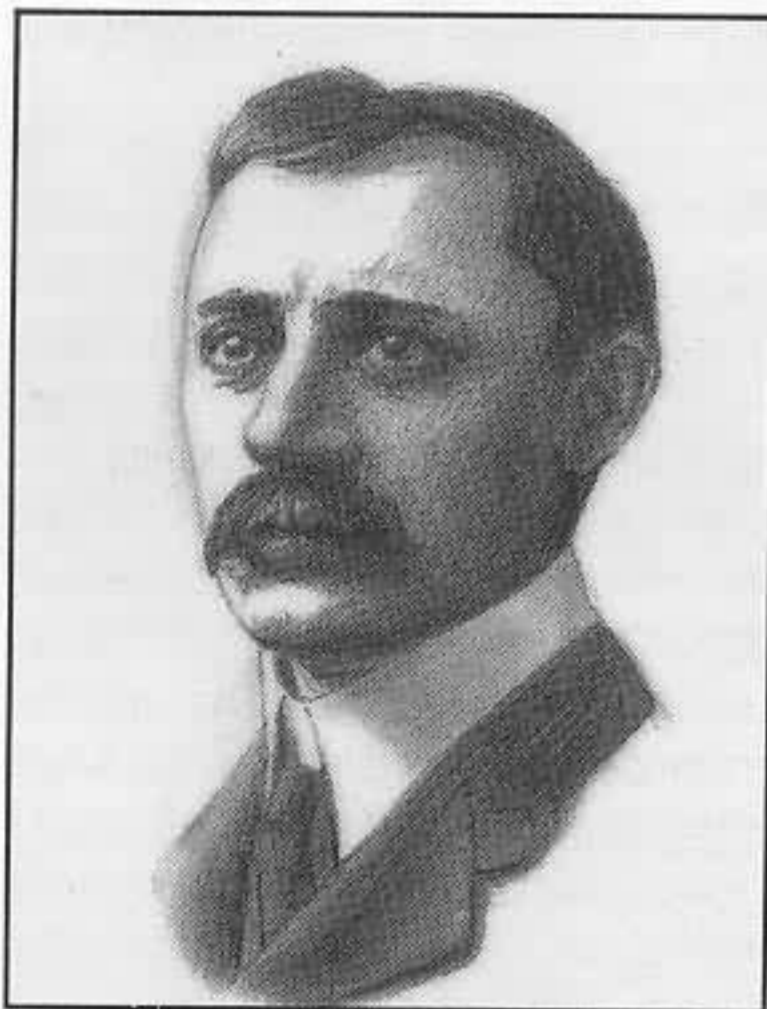
A biographical sketch of Lyman P. Spencer's life is detailed earlier in this chapter. In brief, he was without question the most artistic of the Spencer children, and the finest penman among his siblings. Born in 1840, he displayed an ability at drawing and illustration during his youth that surpassed many of his elders. While in his twenties he served in the Civil War, after which he devoted his career to developing and promoting the Spencerian publications. In 1876 Lyman Spencer and Henry Flickinger produced a masterwork of the Declaration of Independence for the Centennial Exhibition of the United States. Both men were considered to be the finest penmen of their age, with flawless skill in the execution of letterform and flourish. Together, these artists penned the original specimens for the *New Spencerian Compendium of Penmanship* (1879), the finest book of penmanship at that time. From an historic perspective, Lyman P. Spencer's efforts were noteworthy not only for his facility with a pen, but perhaps more importantly because it was he who served as a vital link between his father, Platt Rogers Spencer, and the most productive generation of American penmen. Through his work with the *Compendium*, the other Spencer publications and his professional associations with other penmen, the guiding principles and philosophy of the Spencerian System of Penmanship continued to influence the style of American handwriting well into the twentieth century. Lyman Spencer lived to his seventy-sixth year, and passed away on June 11, 1915.





**Platt Rogers Spencer**  
1800–1864

Platt R. Spencer was a pioneer not only in the field of penmanship, but also that of American business education. A biography of "Father Spencer" is to be found earlier in this chapter. Throughout his life, he earned the respect of countless individuals who studied and practiced the Spencerian method of writing, as well as those who heard him speak on the dignity of human rights. In this subject he was most outspoken, crying aloud publicly for the abolition of slavery. The subject of his life is a story of personal conviction, inspiration and dedicated effort. Platt Rogers Spencer passed away on May 16, 1864 in Geneva, Ohio.

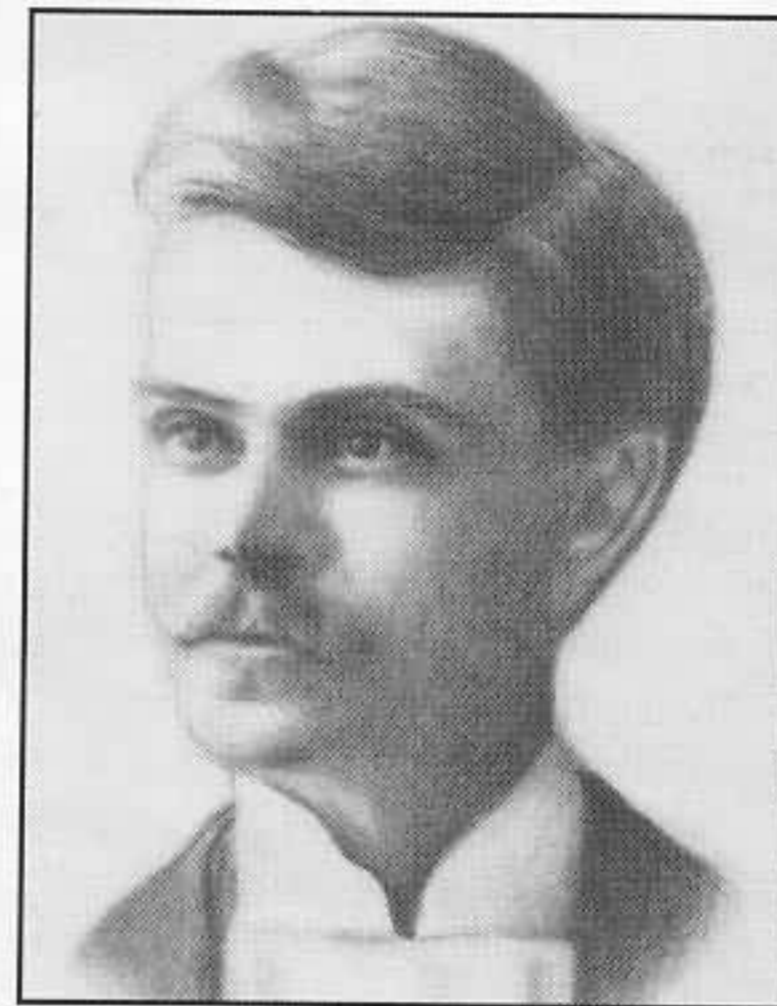


**Frederick W. Tamblyn**  
1870–1947

Frederick W. Tamblyn was born on a farm in western Kansas in 1870. At the age of sixteen, he gained his first start in penmanship under the instruction of Mr. Goss, an itinerant writing teacher. The gracefulness and beauty of the writing fascinated young Tamblyn, and he was filled with a determination that would allow nothing to prevent his progress in mastering the techniques of ornamental penmanship. He learned a great deal while studying on his own, scanning the pages of such penmanship magazines as *Gaskell's Guide*, *The Western Penman* and the *Penman's Art Journal*.

After graduating from High School in Paola, Kansas, he attended and subsequently graduated from the Central Business College at Sedalia, Missouri. Here he remained for five years as a member of the faculty. In 1894, after an

experience as an itinerant teacher, he spent some time in engrossing and teaching in St. Louis, and in 1897, located permanently in Kansas City, Missouri. For forty years Mr. Tamblyn conducted business there, turning out exceptional work in engrossing, cardwriting, and most significantly—lessons by mail. In this last category he was a pioneer, establishing himself as the leader in correspondence courses for nearly two generations. He was a very successful and most inspiring teacher, who strove to impress upon his students the necessity of faithful application that was paramount to achieving proficiency in penmanship. At the time of his death on February 16, 1947, it was estimated that he had trained over 40,000 men and women in penmanship through his "lessons by mail."



**Albert D. Taylor**  
1863–1898

A. D. Taylor, "the Wonder of the Penmanship World," was born near Somonauk, Illinois on August 21, 1863. His first writing lessons were from H. H. Miller, a traveling writing teacher. While still in his teens, he won the prize (a year's subscription to *The Business Journal*, an early penmanship magazine) for the greatest improvement in penmanship within one year's period.

In 1883 he took a commercial course at Elliott's Business College in Burlington, Iowa, studying penmanship from noted penman I. W. Pierson. In 1885 he studied with A. N. Palmer in Chicago for several months, and in August was employed as a penman by the Bryant & Stratton Business College of Chicago. After spending a year with this school he spent some time in New York, then in 1887 he traveled again, accepting a penman's position at the Los Angeles, California Business College. He remained there for 2 years, afterwards accepting a job with Mr. Elliott once more, returning to Burlington, Iowa for a 3 year period. During 1892 he was employed to fill out names on invitations for the World's Columbian Commission. He was next employed with the Chicago Guaranty Fund Life Society as a policy writer. In the mid 1890's he worked for the Galveston, Texas Business University, performing duties as penman and correspondent.

Throughout his life, A. D. Taylor astounded the penmanship profession with his writing.

He succumbed to tuberculosis at the age of 35 years. Despite his youth, he is remembered as one of the most highly skilled penmen of all time. His writing was phenomenal—it was considered to be the finest and most perfect that could be performed by the human hand. Unlike



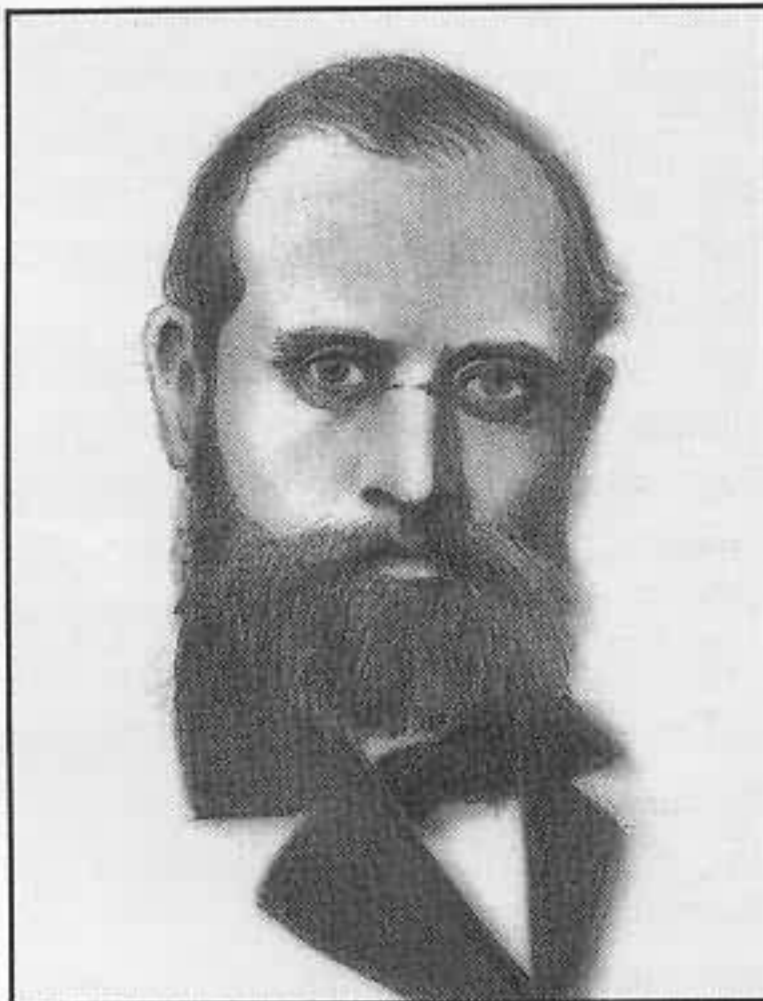
the bold, dramatic style of Madarasz, A. D. Taylor's work was delicate and fine in detail, with a precision of spacing and letterform that was absolute. He died in San Antonio, Texas on December 27, 1898.



**John D. Williams**  
1829–1871

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in the year 1829, John D. Williams was known as one of the finest Off-Hand Flourishing penmen who ever lived. As with many of the master penmen, he showed an interest in handwriting from his early childhood, and this manifested itself in the discipline of off-hand flourishing. Mr. Williams first gained prominence through the advertising of Peter Duff, proprietor of Duff's Commercial College in Pittsburgh, in whose employ the young penman was for a number of years. It was during this tenure that John D. Williams is given credit for originating many of the flourishing designs since attempted by penmen. In 1866 he produced a great quantity of remarkable flourishes, and with Mr. Silas Packard (yet another great penman from the past), published *Packard and Williams' Gems of Penmanship*.

In later years, he gave much attention to the preparation of his work for engraving in future publications. He died at the age of 42 in January, 1871.



**Charles Paxton Zaner**  
1864–1918

Charles Paxton Zaner was born on a farm near Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania on February 15, 1864. He showed a fondness for handwriting early in his youth, and after com-

pleting his common school curriculum, he went to Oberlin, Ohio in 1882 to enroll in G. W. Michael's Pen Art Hall course in penmanship. For a short time after finishing the class work in Oberlin, he traveled to Audubon, Illinois to assist his brother in a business venture. Within a short period of time (approximately one year), his desire to earn his living as a penman caused him to journey to Delaware, Ohio, becoming a teacher of penmanship in a local college. In 1888 he left Delaware and went to Columbus, Ohio as an instructor of penmanship in yet another business college. Not long afterward the school was closed, and it was then, in 1888, that C. P. Zaner decided to establish a school of his own. Originally known as the *Zanerian Art College*, Master Penman Lloyd Kelchner became a partner with Zaner the following year. In 1891 Elmer W. Bloser joined the partnership, but before the end of the same year, Kelchner left the business arrangement, resulting in Zaner and Bloser becoming equal partners in the Zaner-Bloser Company.

For the rest of Mr. Zaner's life, he continued, with the help of Mr. Bloser, to improve the status of the Zanerian College. Zaner was instrumental in authoring the texts used at his institution, and through the medium of the Zanerian's penmanship magazine—the *Business Educator*—he published countless lessons in every branch of penmanship and pen art, involving the talents of the finest penmen, engrossers, and educators. These men and women, representing the very best in their respective fields, contributed their talents monthly to the magazine, providing penmanship specimens, information on various techniques, and advertising for all manner of supplies, equipment, and correspondence courses. Through Mr. Zaner's vision and insight into the field of Penmanship, countless thousands of people learned the method and manner of such handwriting.

His skill at wielding a pen was legendary, and he thoroughly deserved his unofficial title as "the world's best all-around penman." In every standard lettering style, as well as in off-hand flourishing, his flawless models were breathtaking examples of perfection in the penman's art. He was a sincere and devoted instructor who inspired his students to achieve their highest potential. In terms of the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship, both C. P. Zaner and E. W. Bloser were pivotal figures where student met master and new careers were launched. Many of the master penmen from the era were products of the Zanerian. Most of those who were not either contributed to the *Business Educator*, or taught in its classrooms. It became the Mecca for penman and penmanship, and its reputation became synonymous with the highest standards of the art.

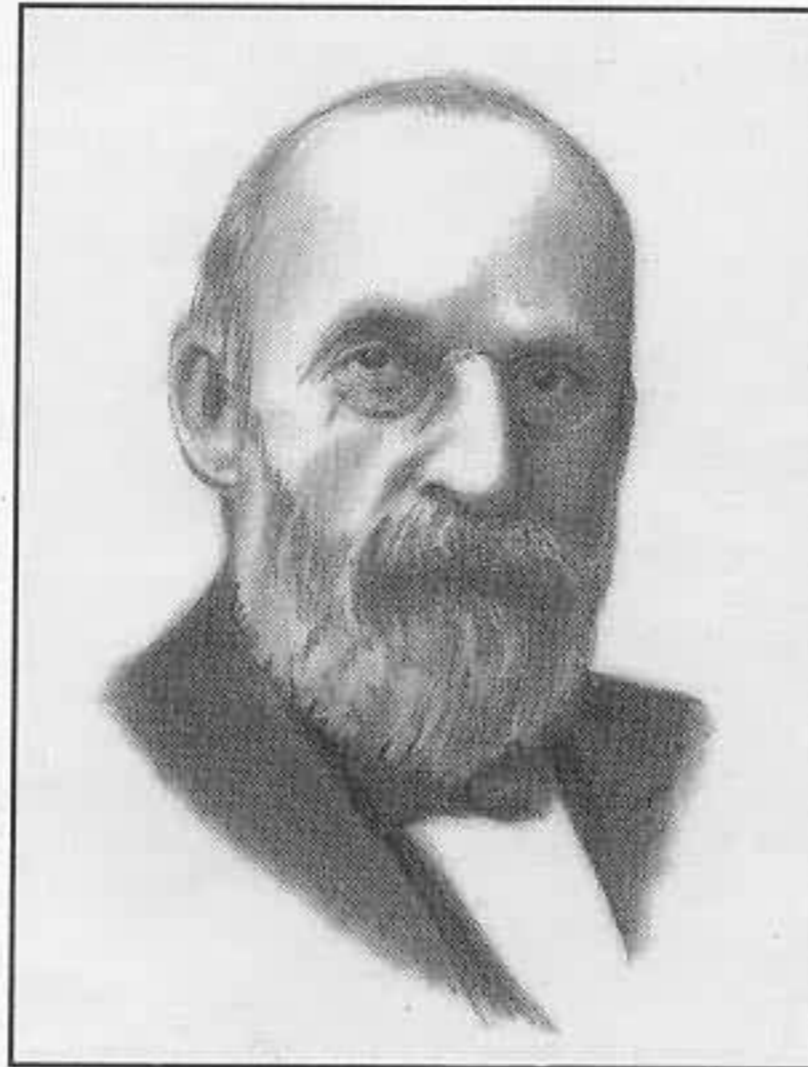
Charles Paxton Zaner's life ended tragically on Sunday evening, December 1, 1918, when the car that he was riding in on a trip back to Columbus was struck by a train which gave no warning of its approach in the darkness. He was 54 years old and in the height of his career. His death was mourned by penmen throughout the country.



**THE PENMAN'S HALL OF FAME**



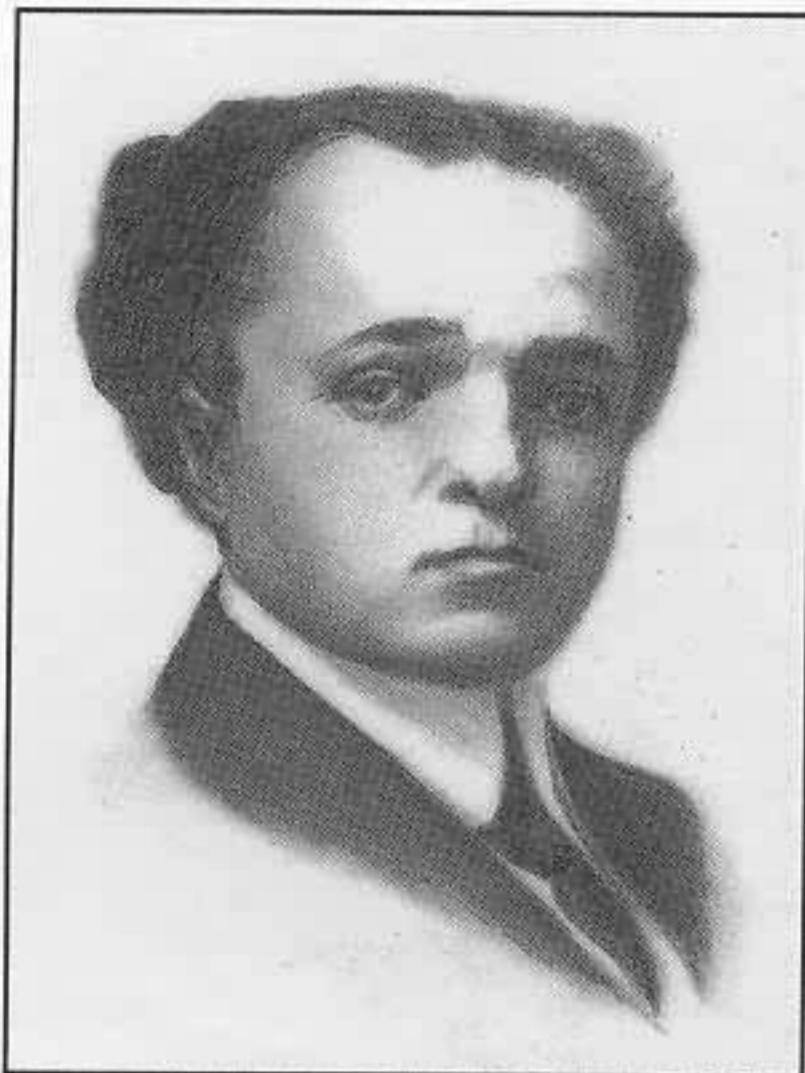
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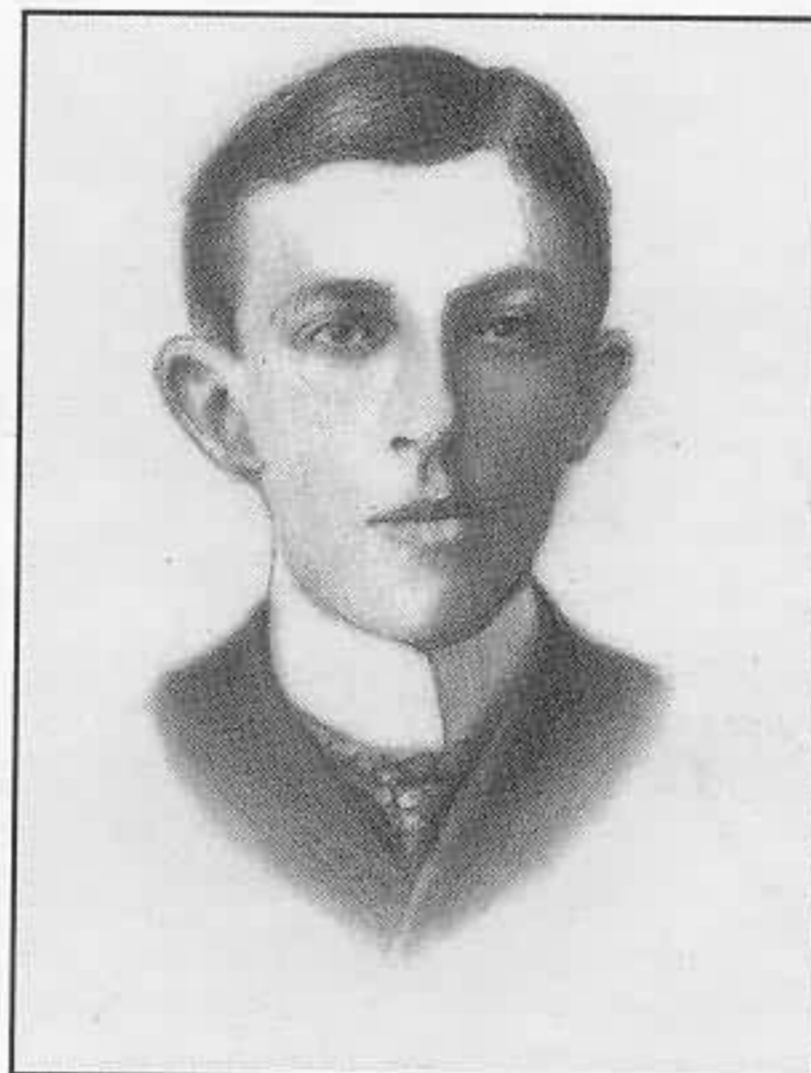
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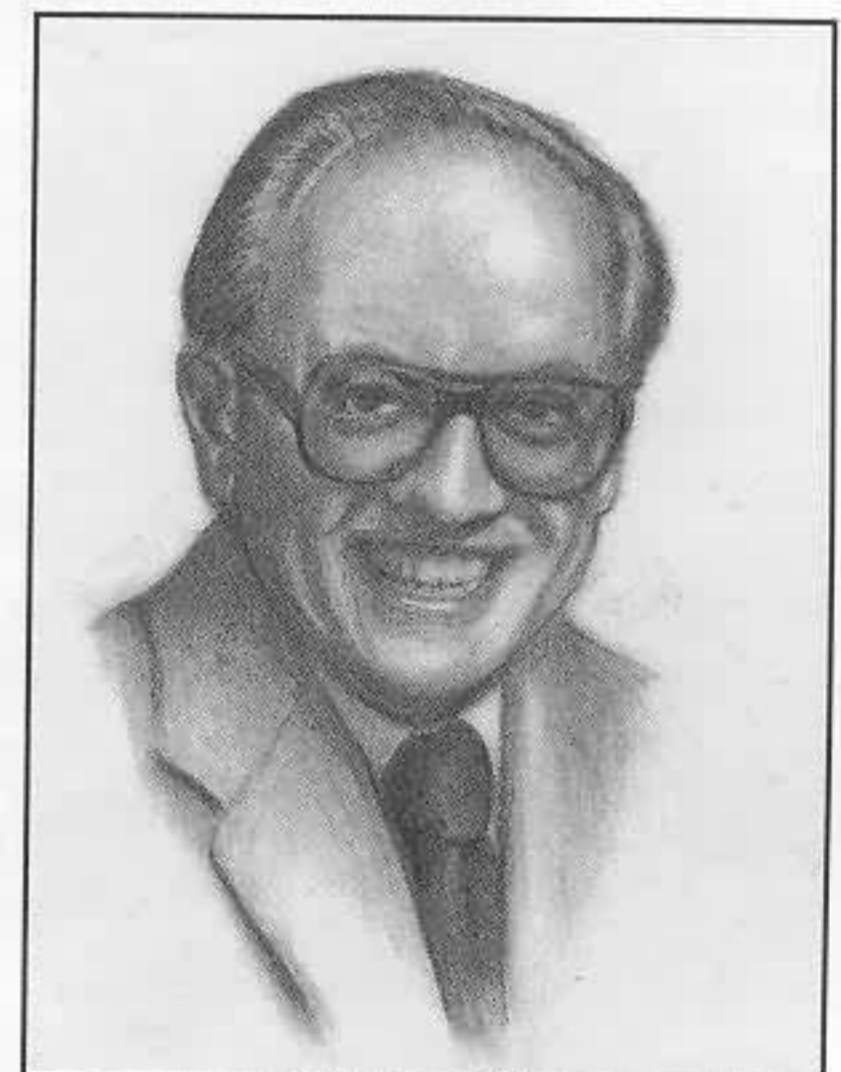
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D. Beauchamp



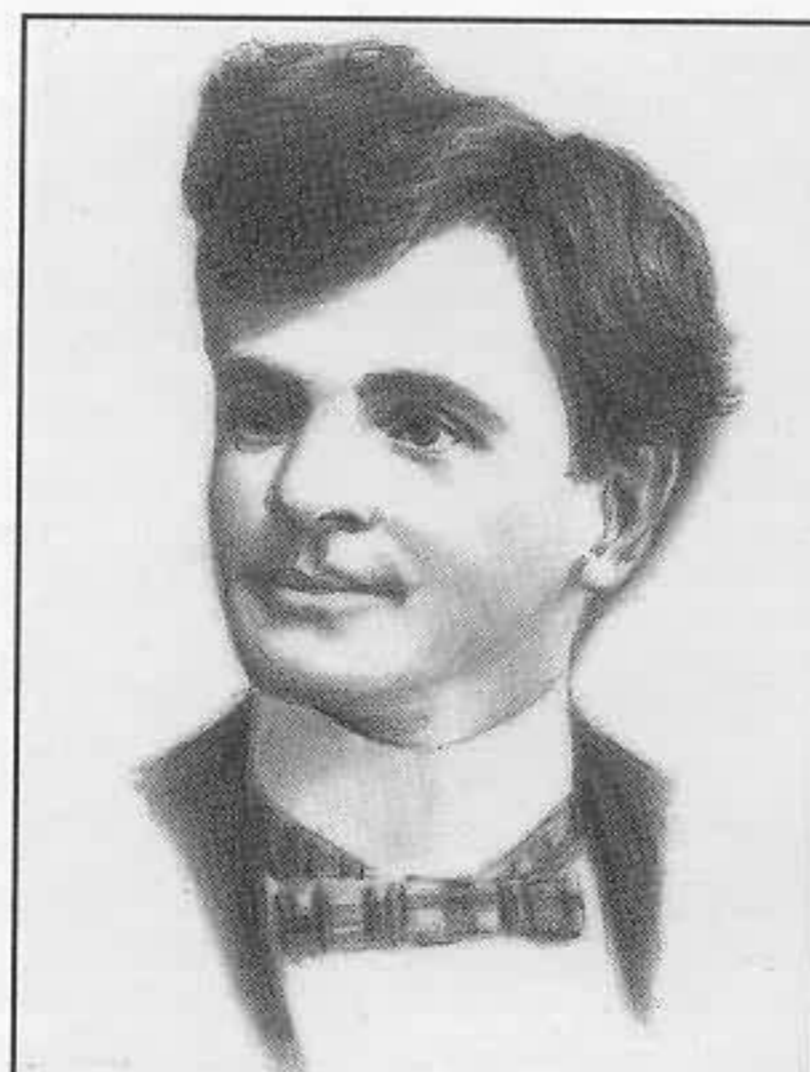
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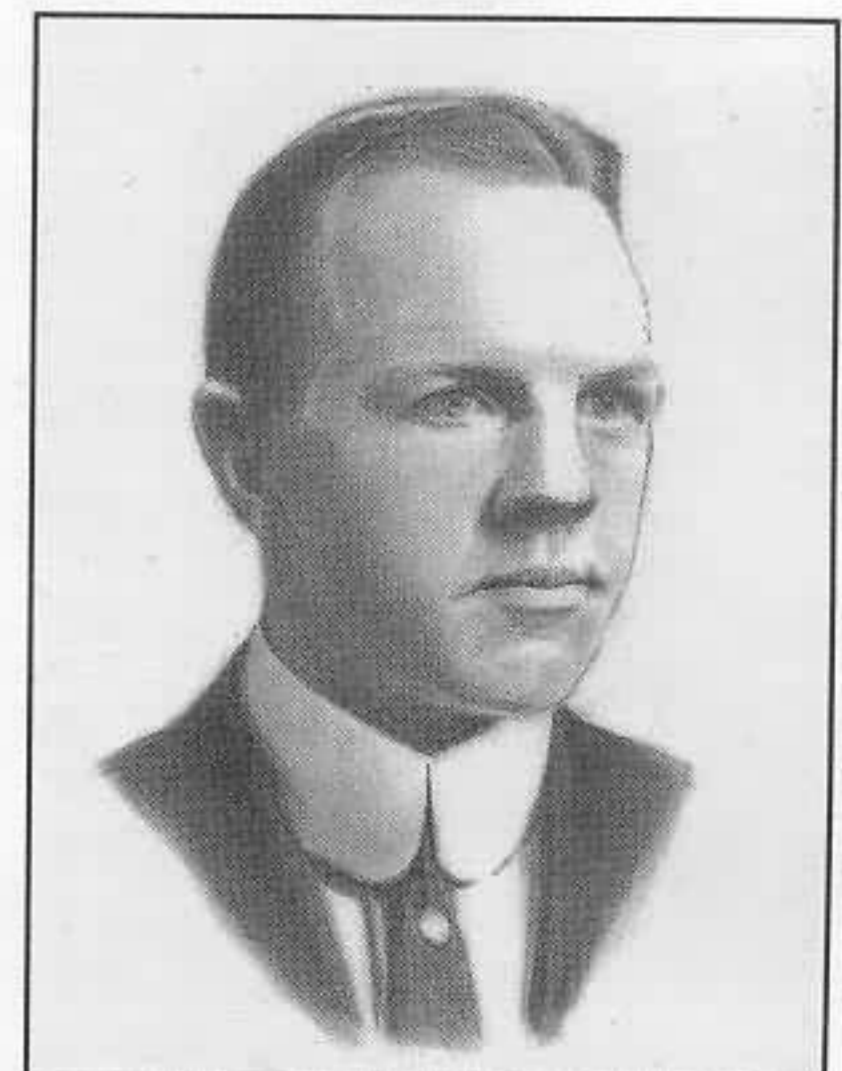
Jewell Bethel



Parker Zaner Bloser

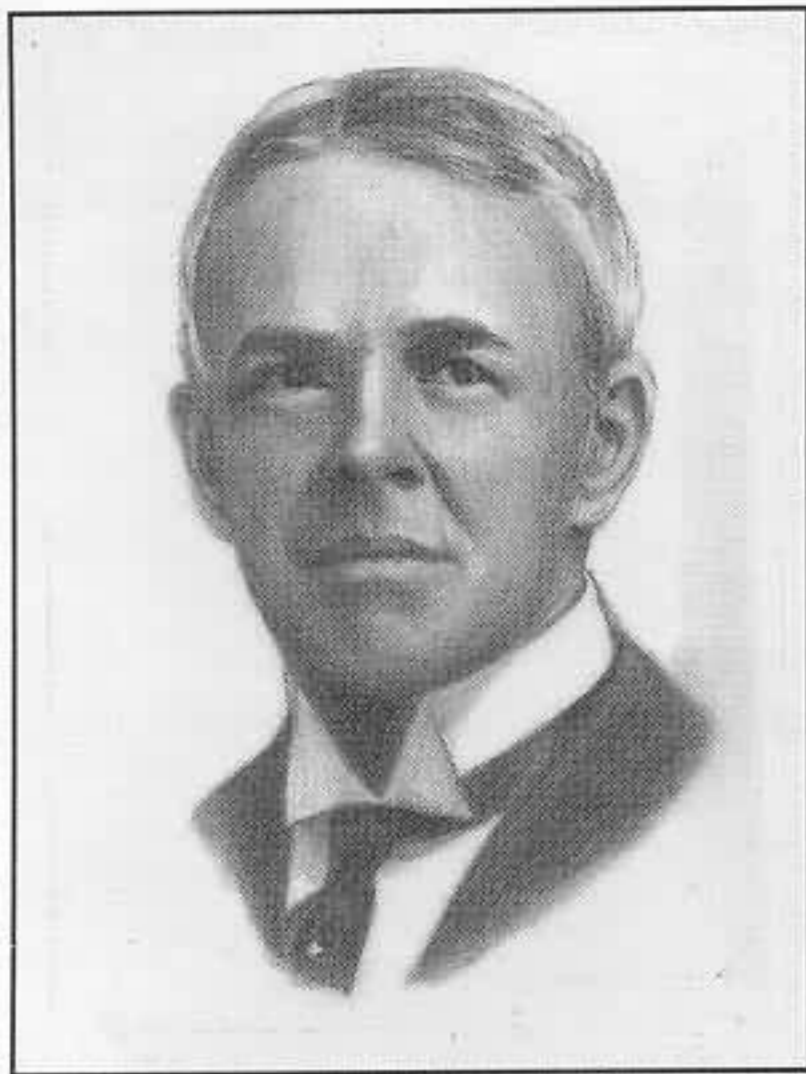


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Warner C. Brownfield





G. R. Brunet



Isaac Weldon Bullock



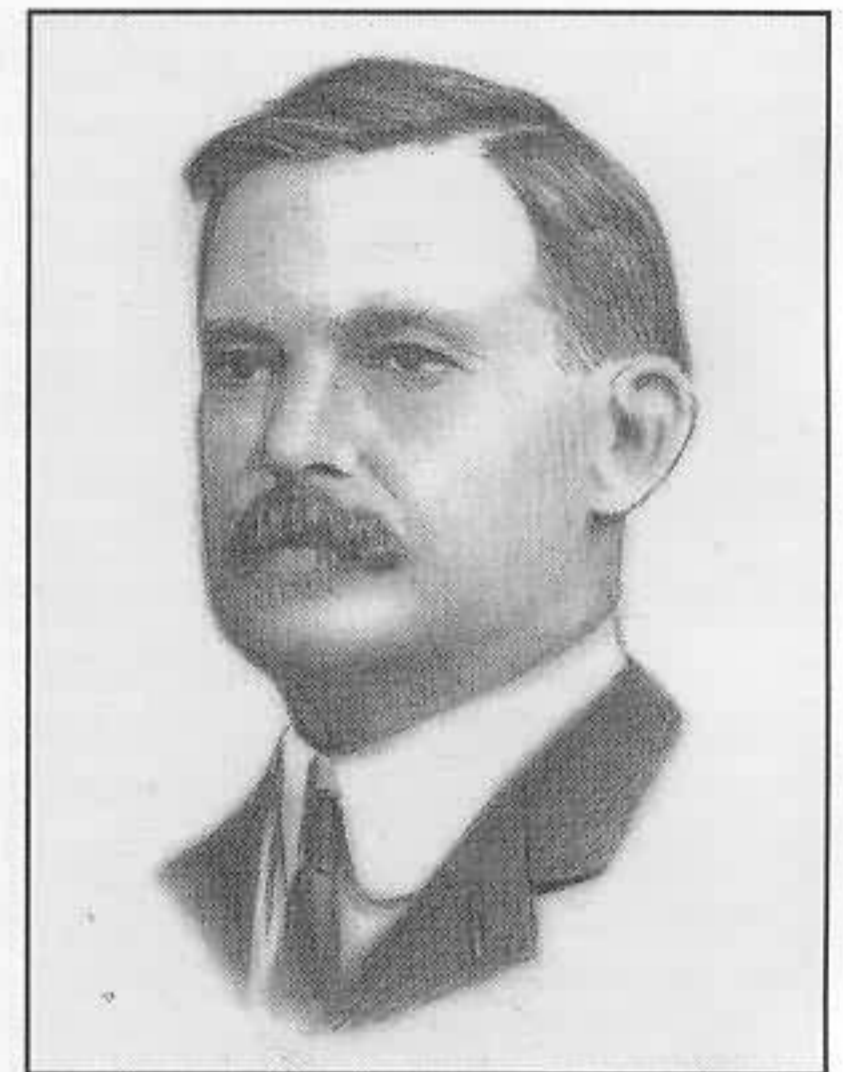
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Mary L. Champion



H. B. Cole



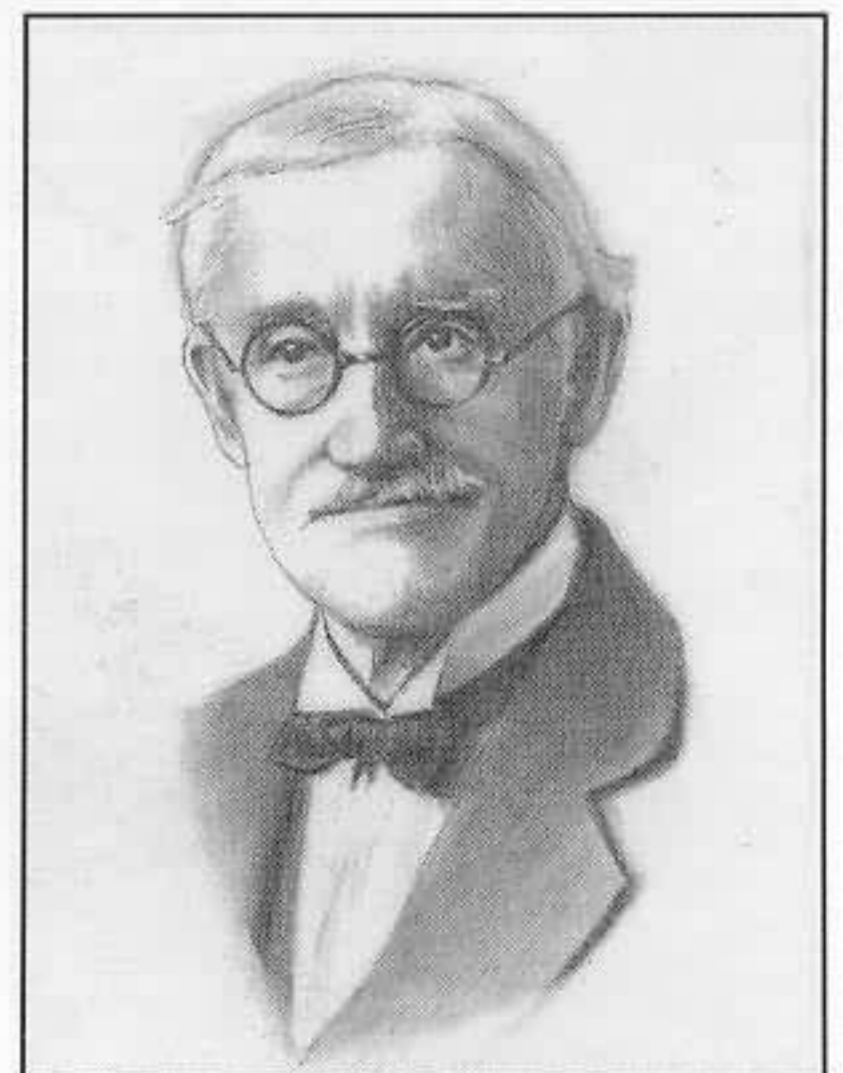
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Chester L. Cook

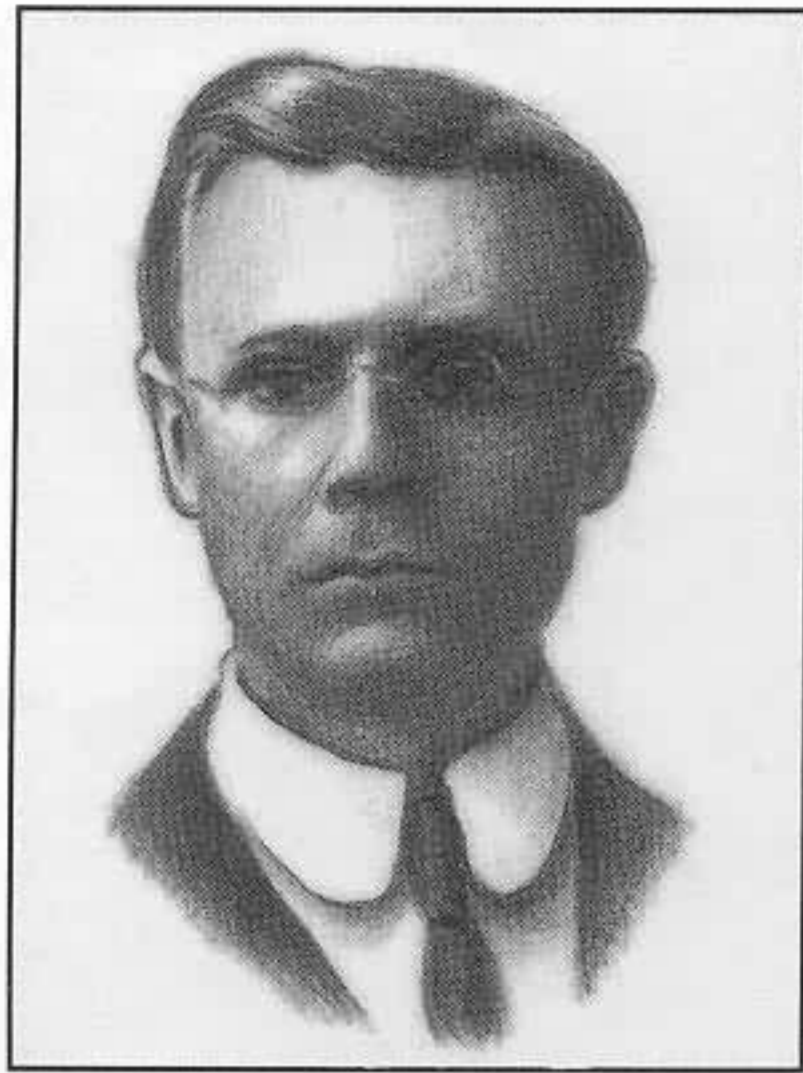


Theodore Courtney



Arthur W. Dakin

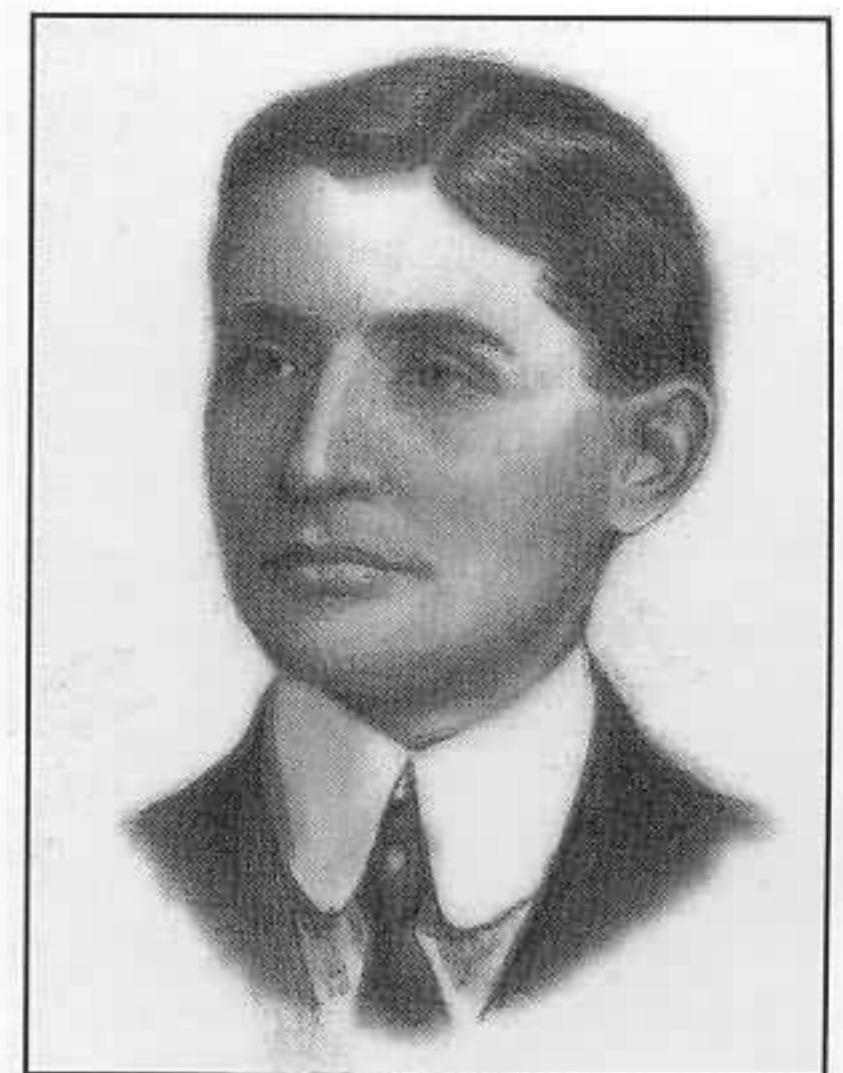




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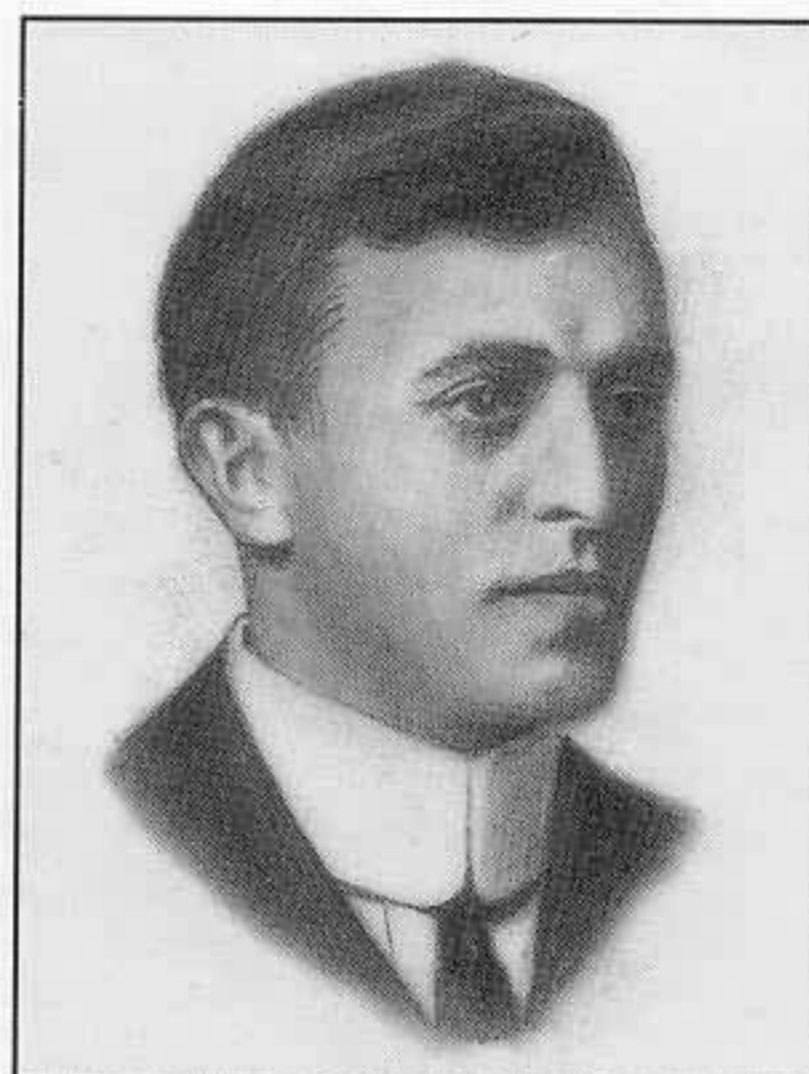
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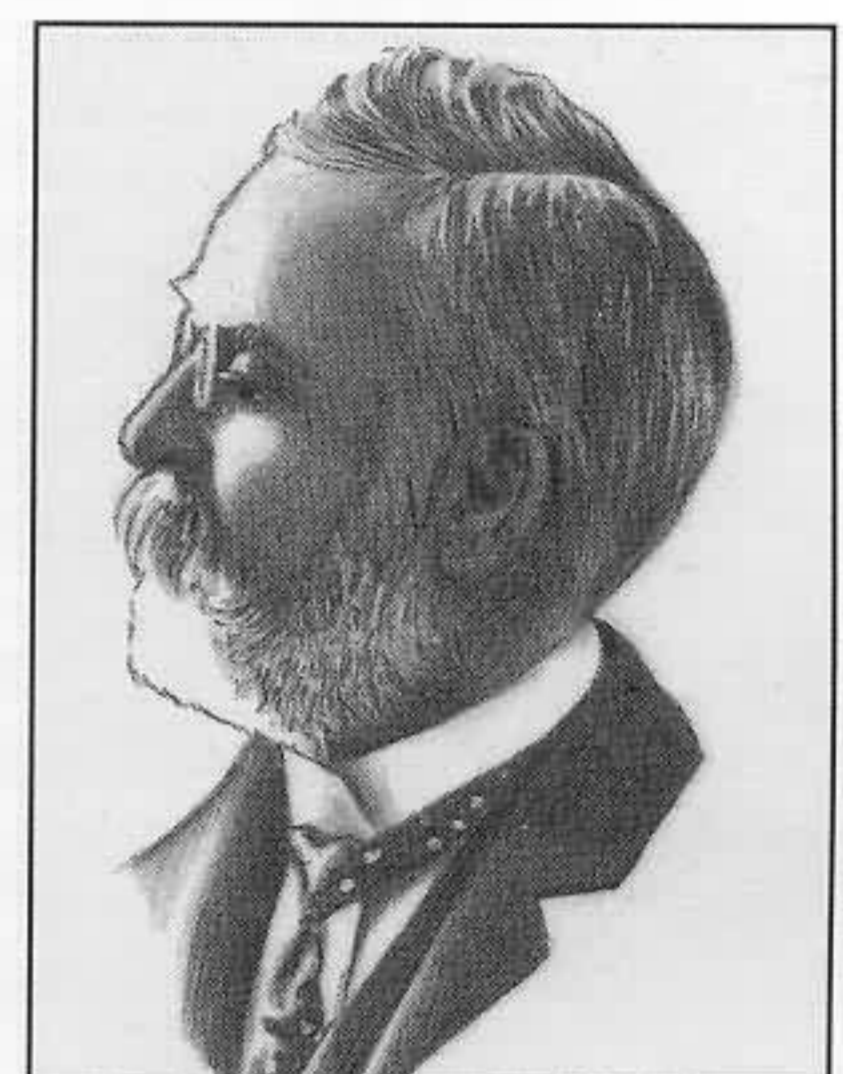
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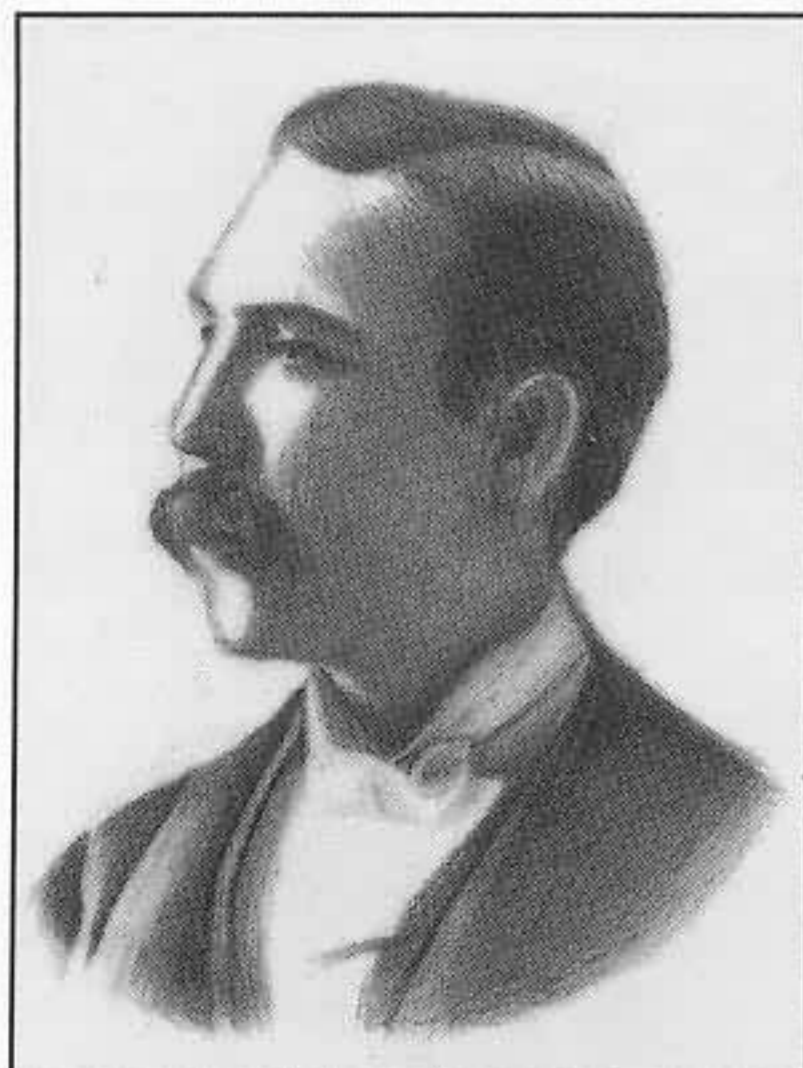
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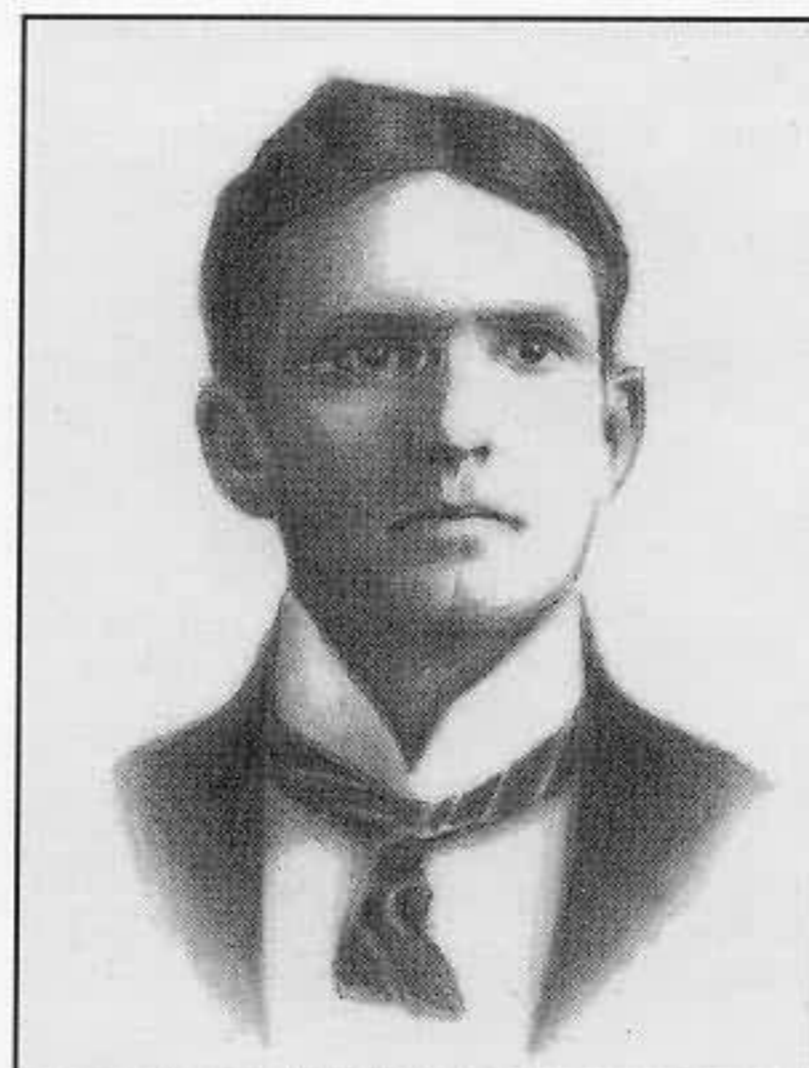
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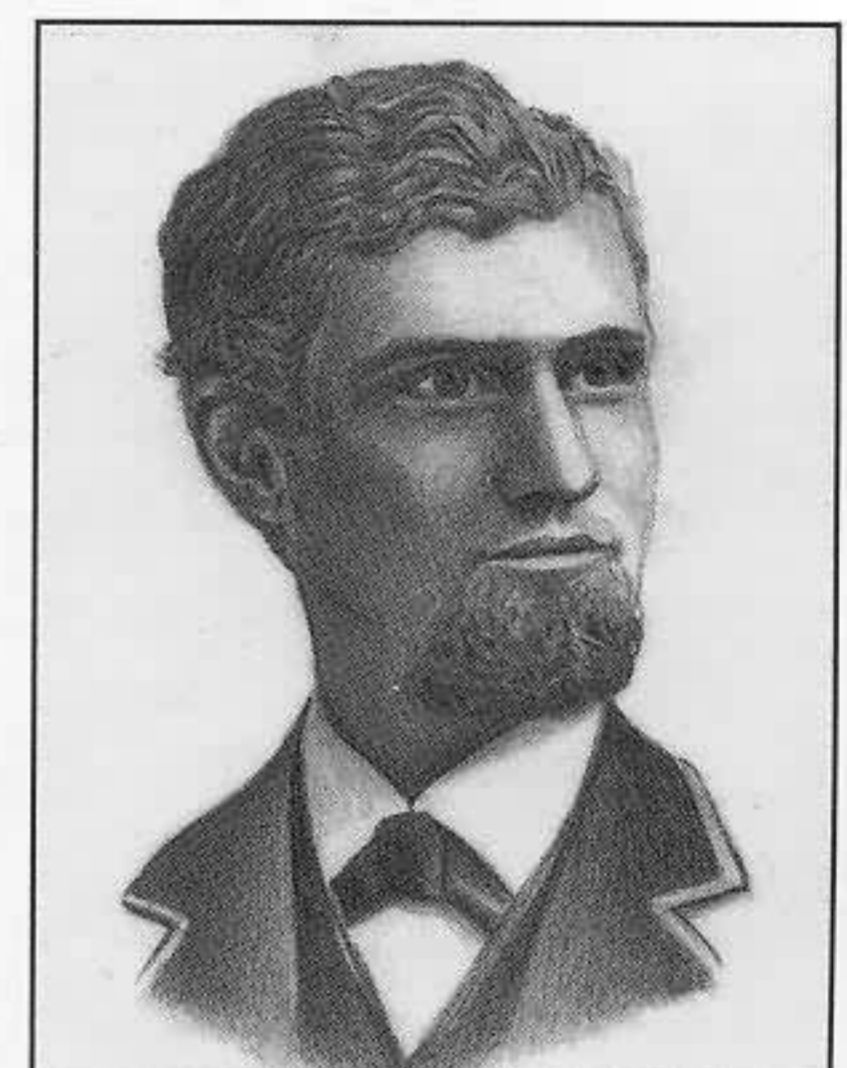
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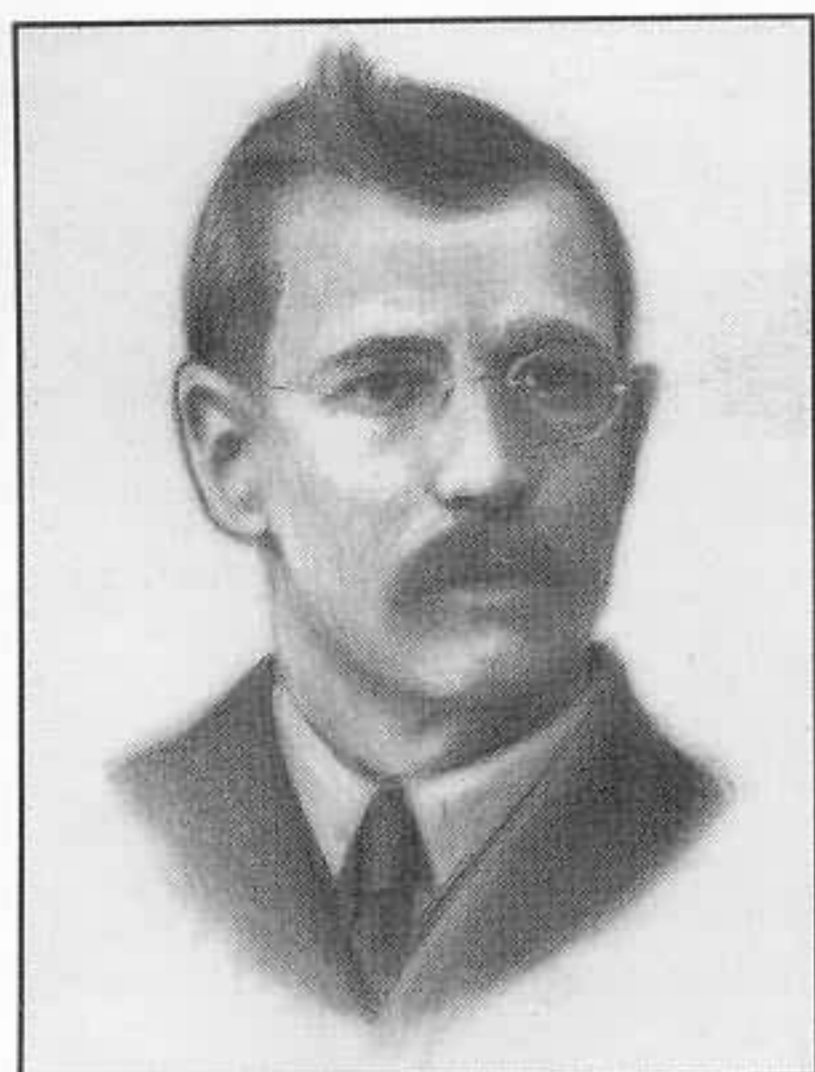


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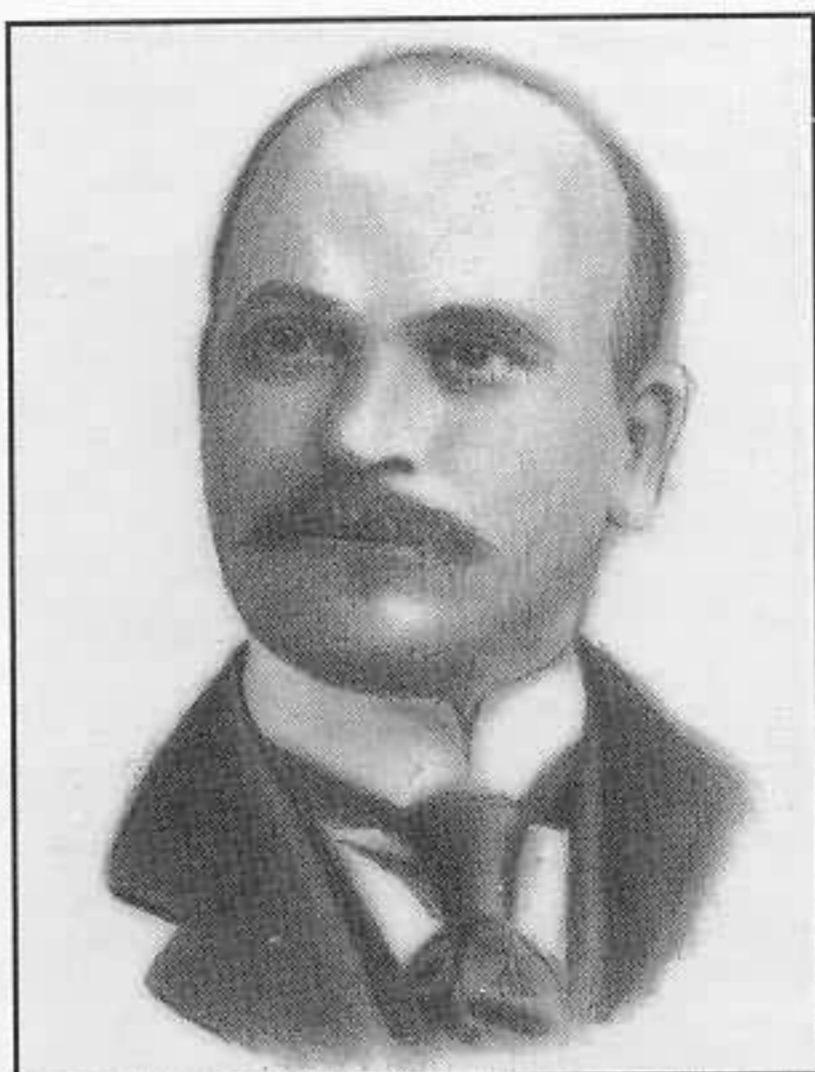


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W. F. Giessemann



E. L. Glick



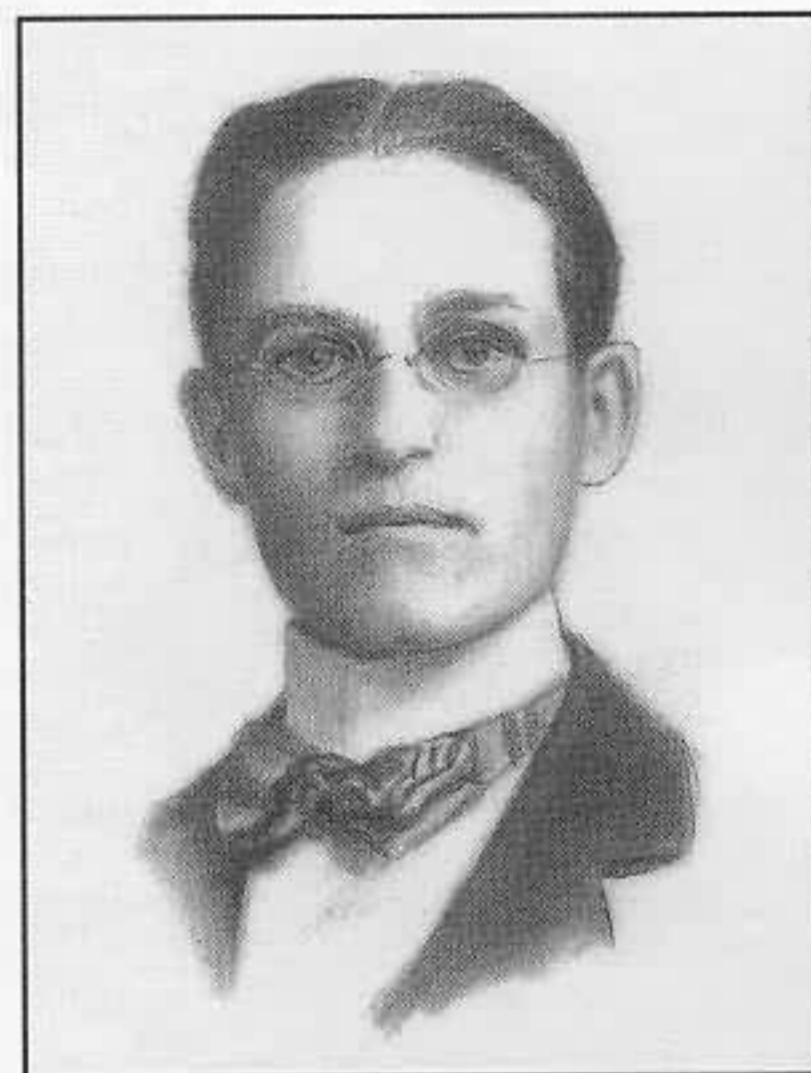
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Rene Guillard



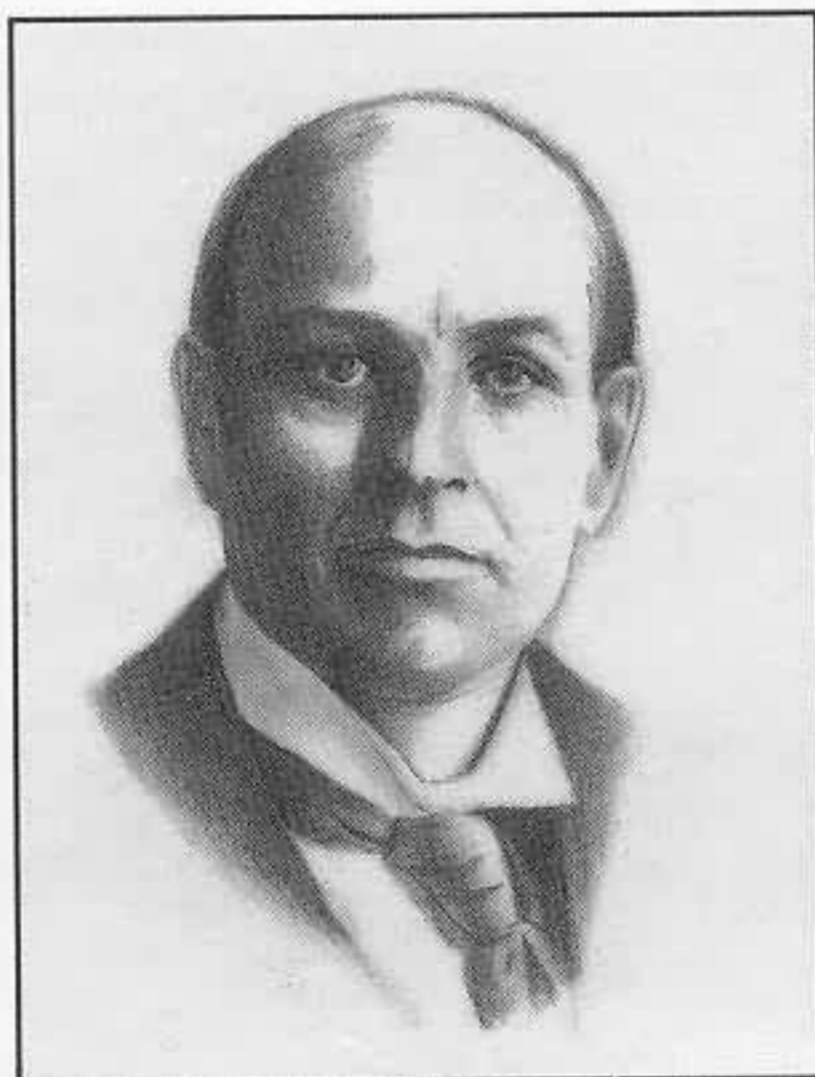
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Horace G. Healey



Frederick S. Heath



William C. Henning



Thomas E. Hill





A. H. Hinman



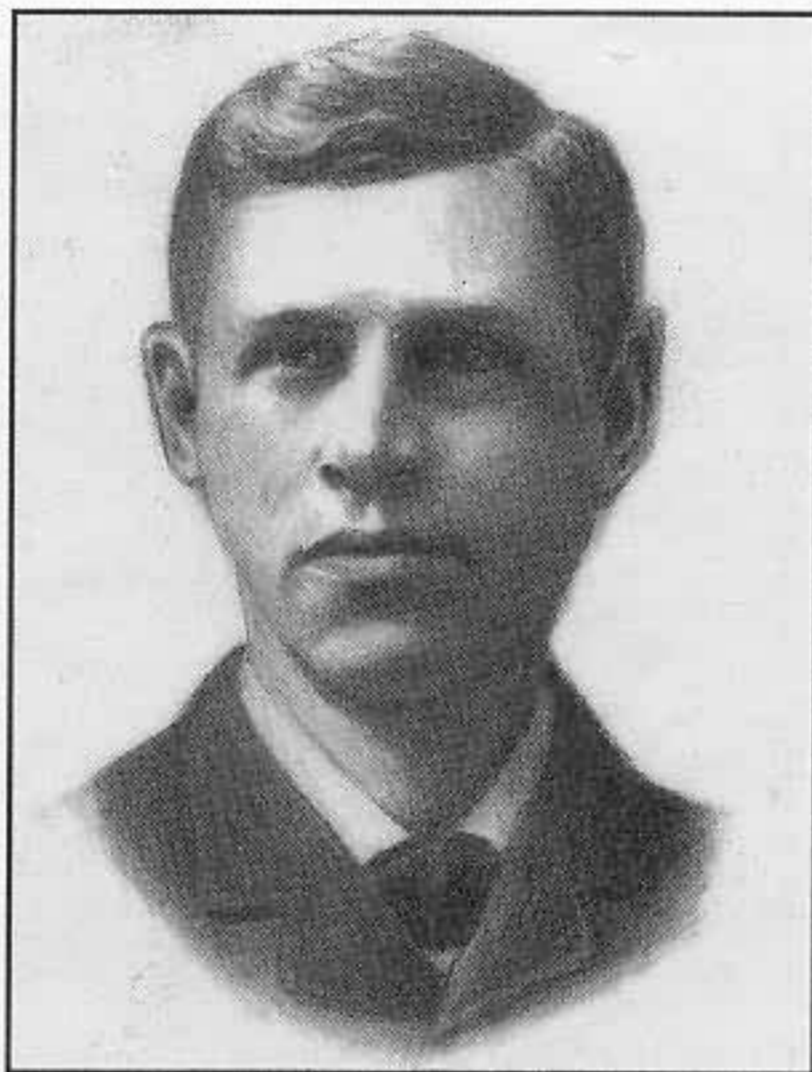
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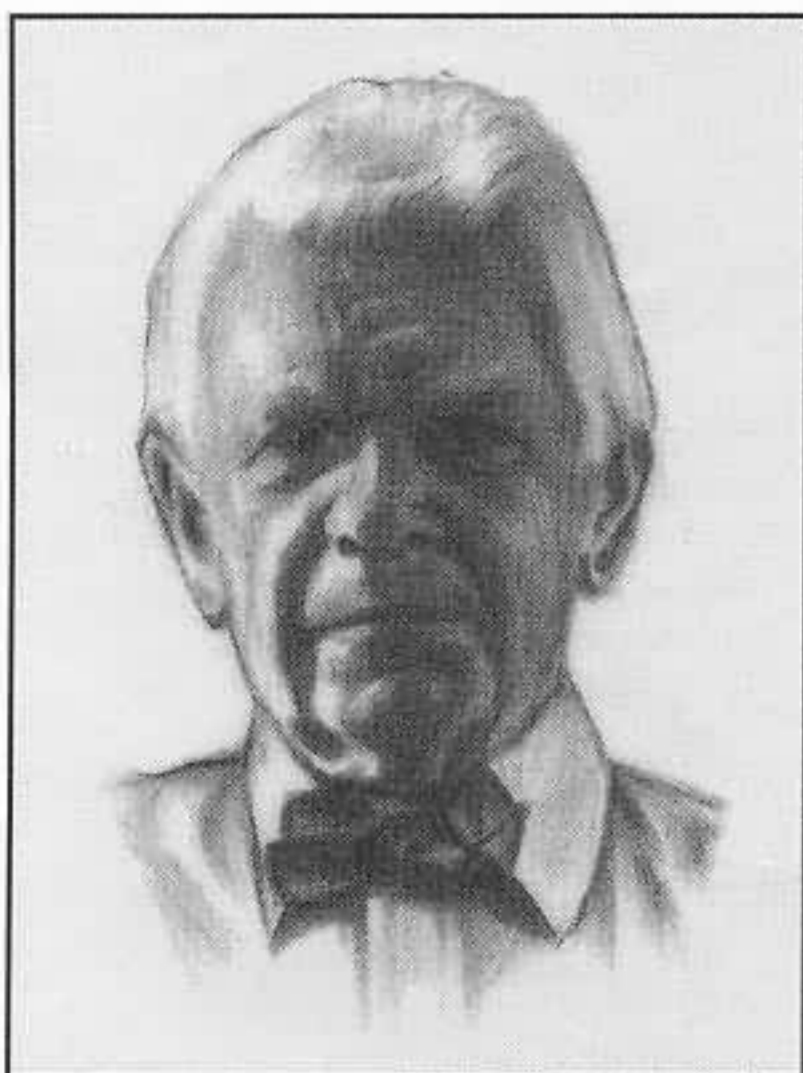
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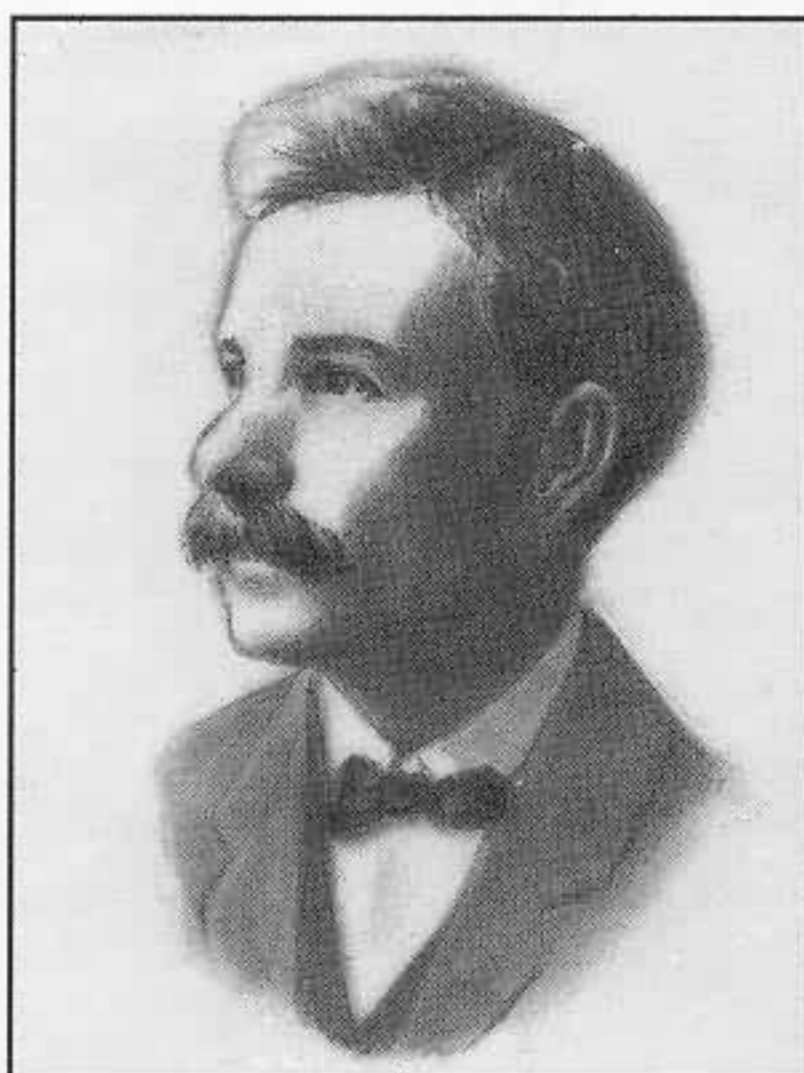
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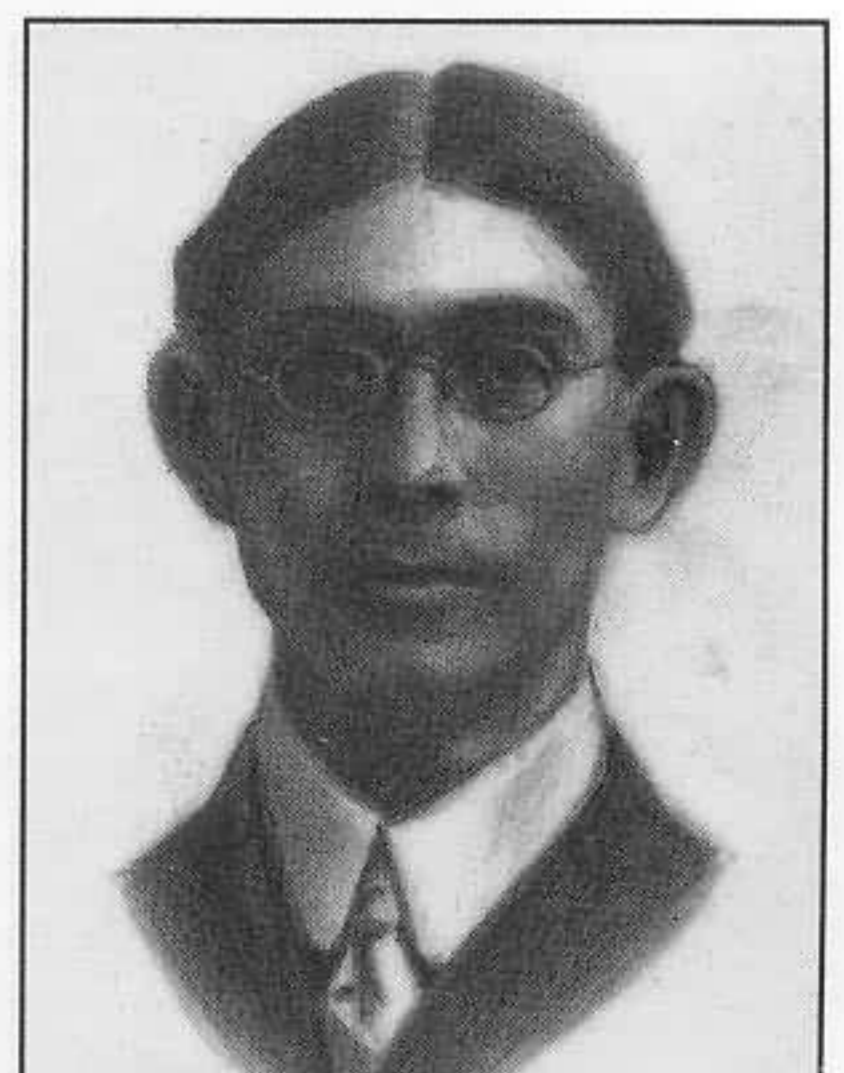
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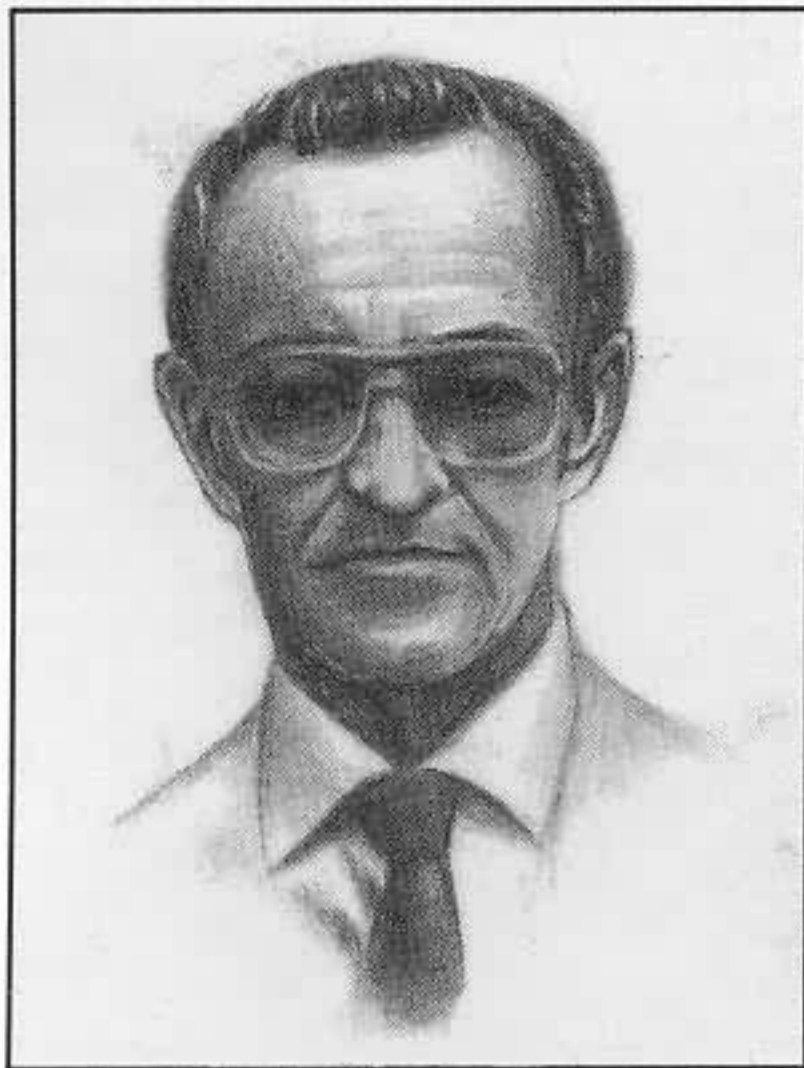


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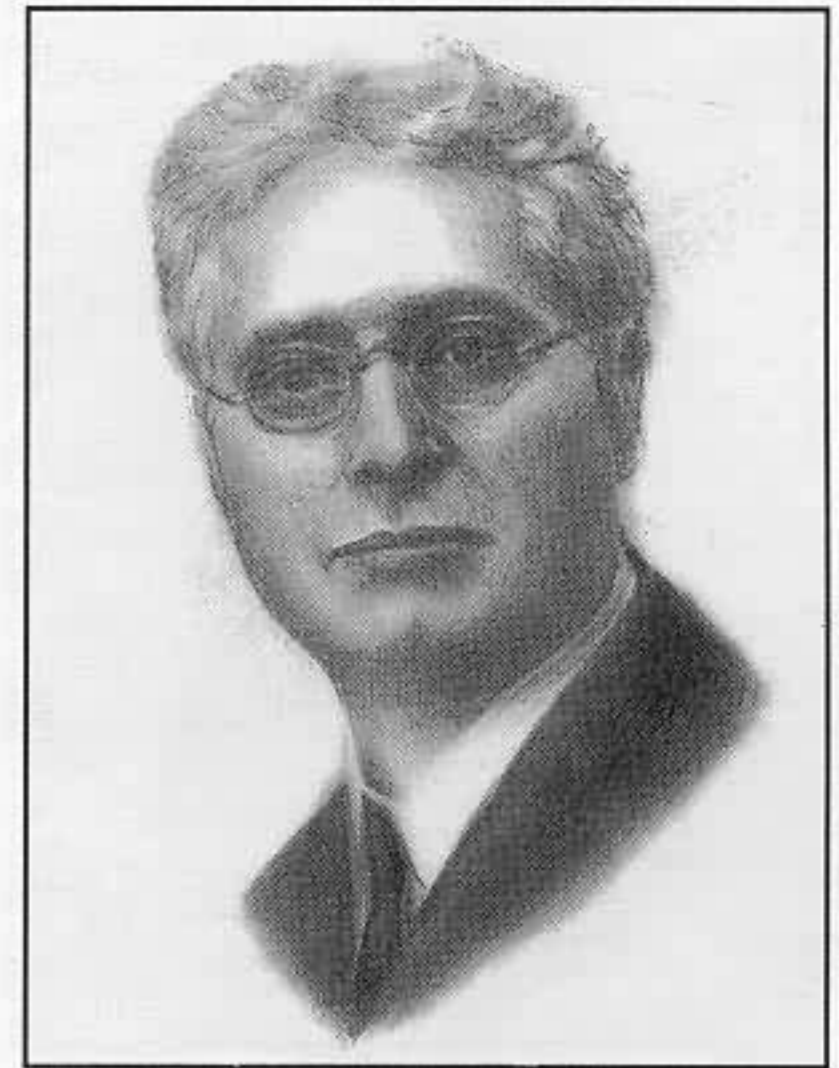




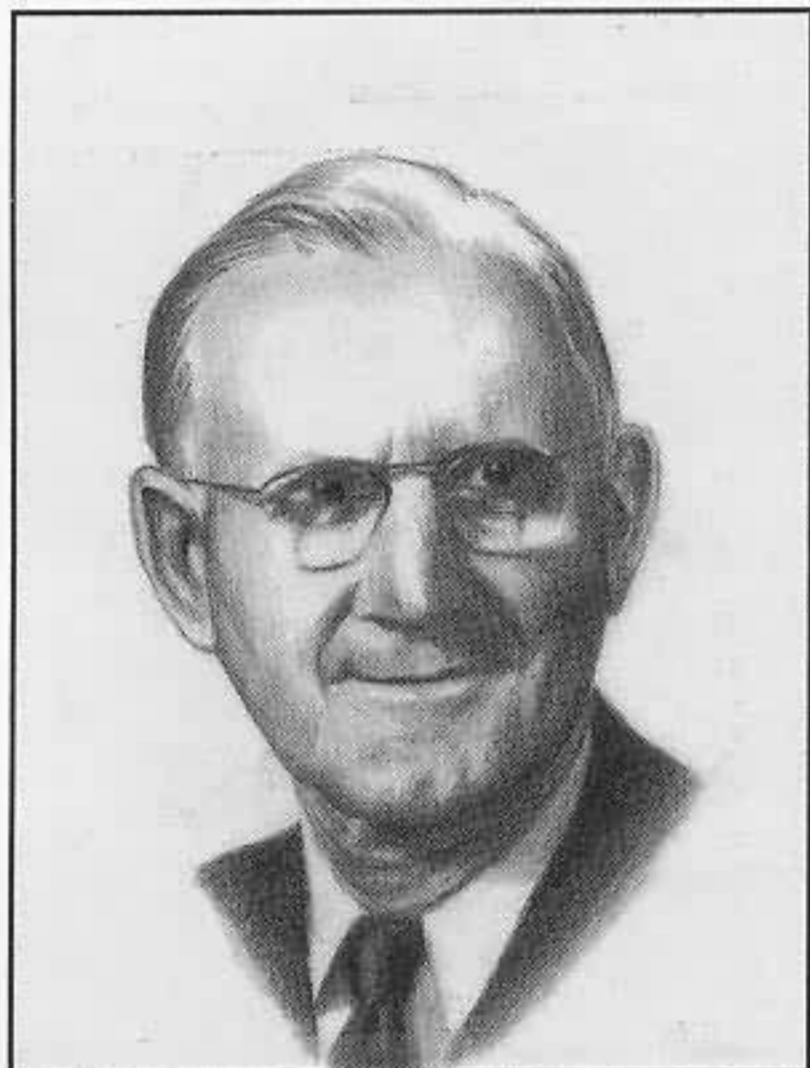
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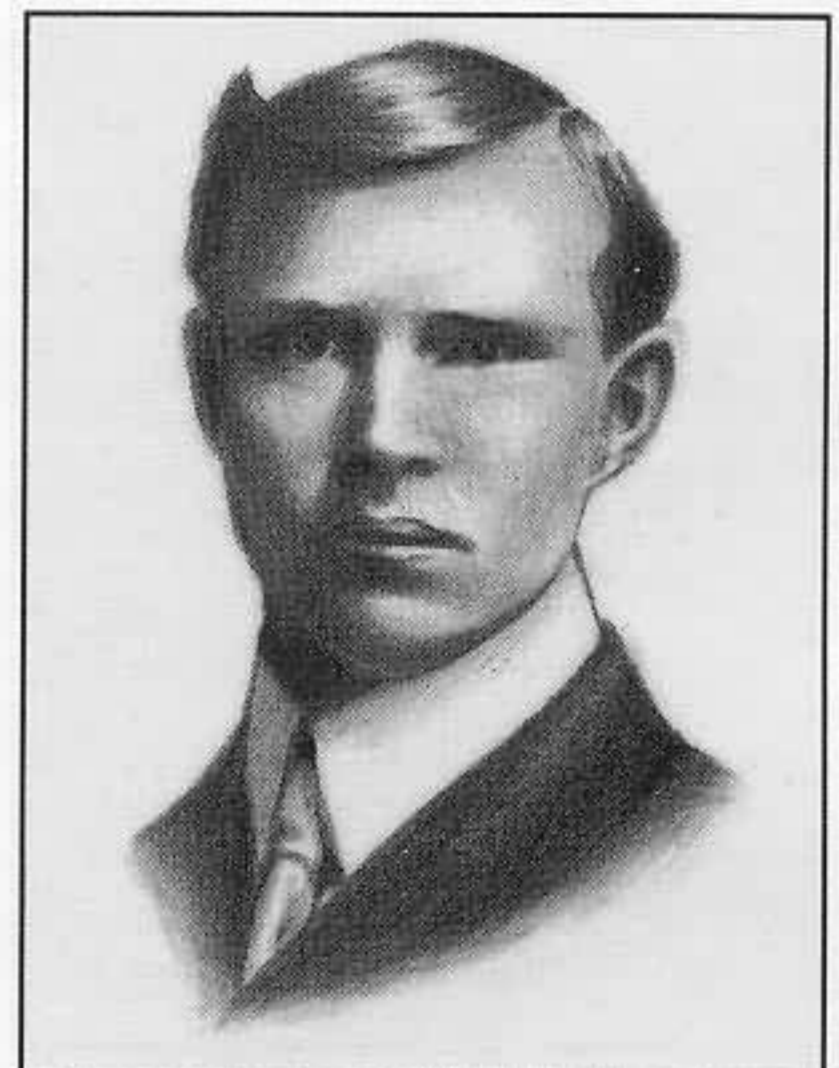
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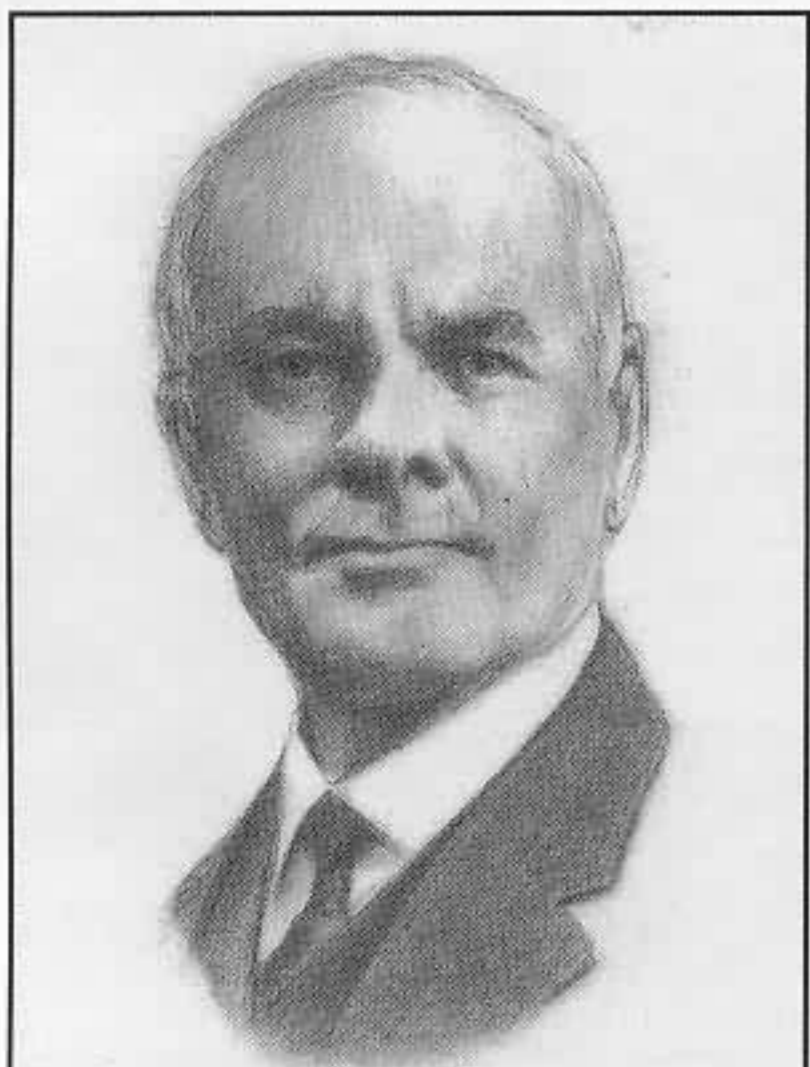
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Earl H. McGhee



G. W. Michael



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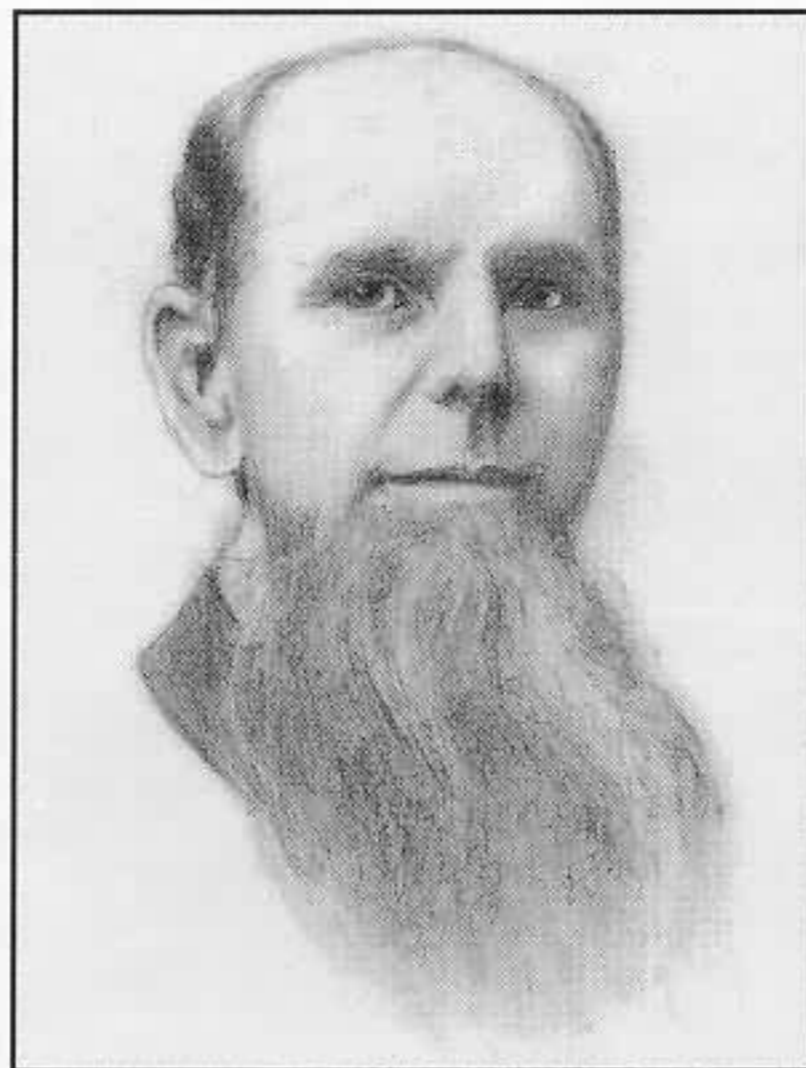


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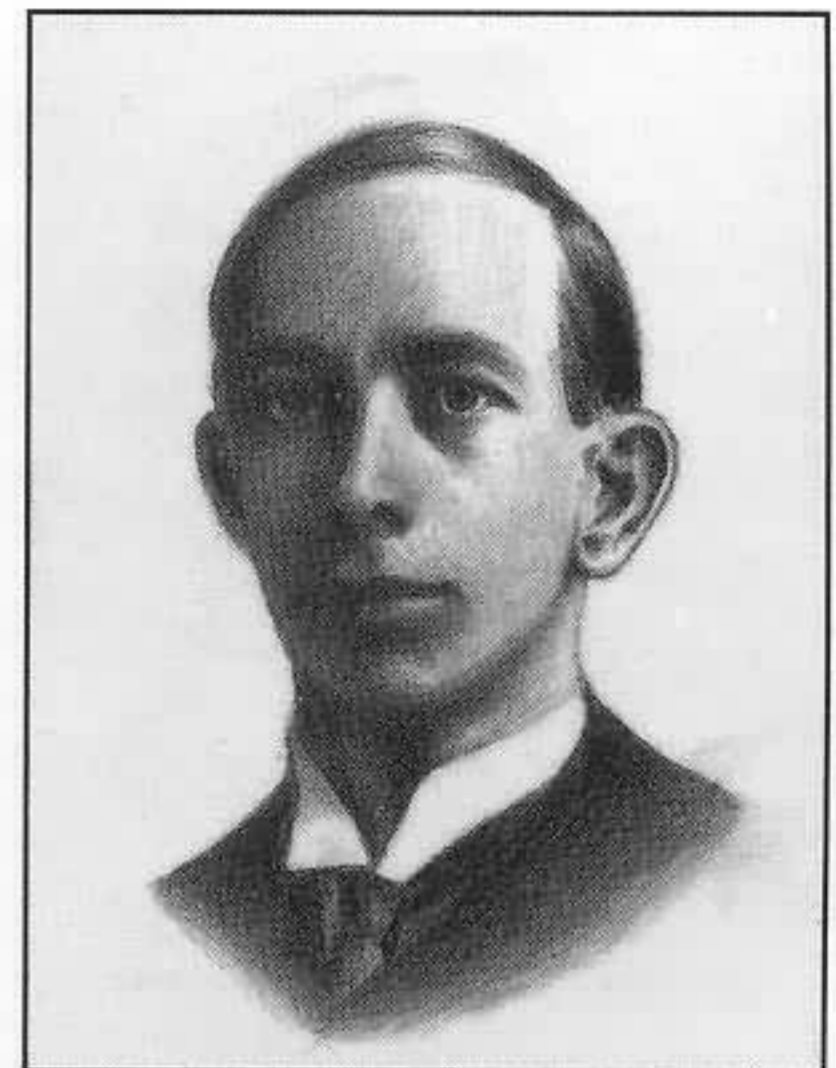




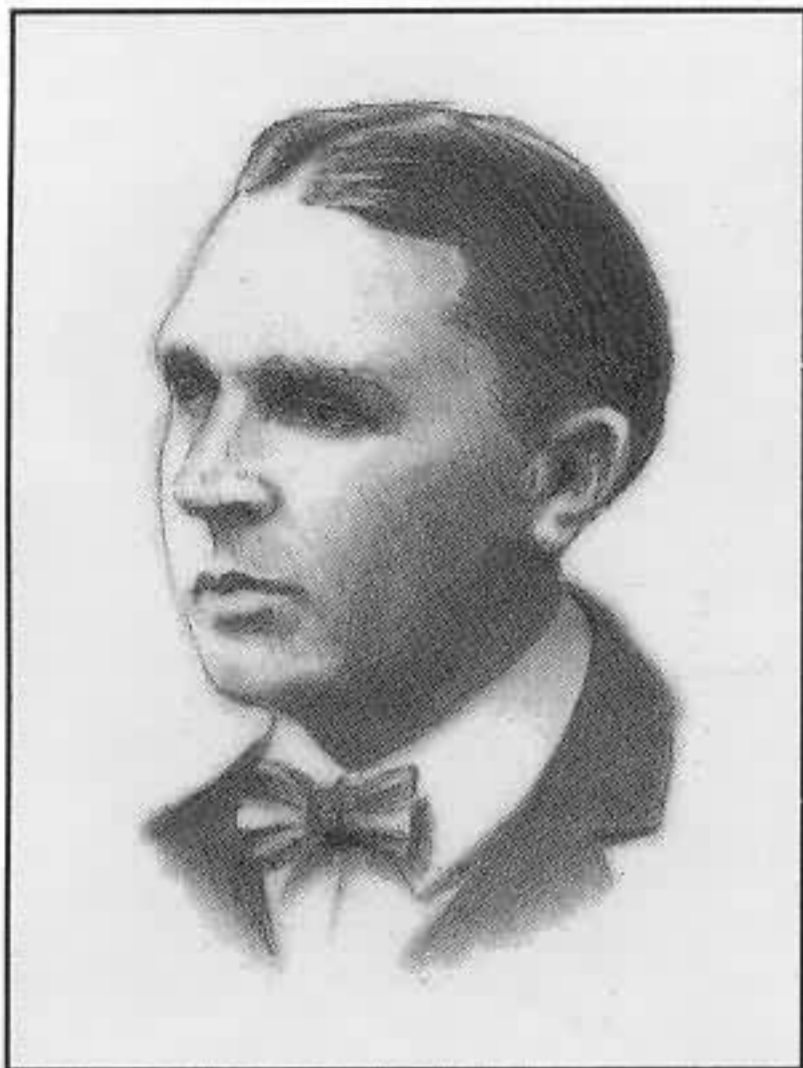
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D. Lafayette Musselman



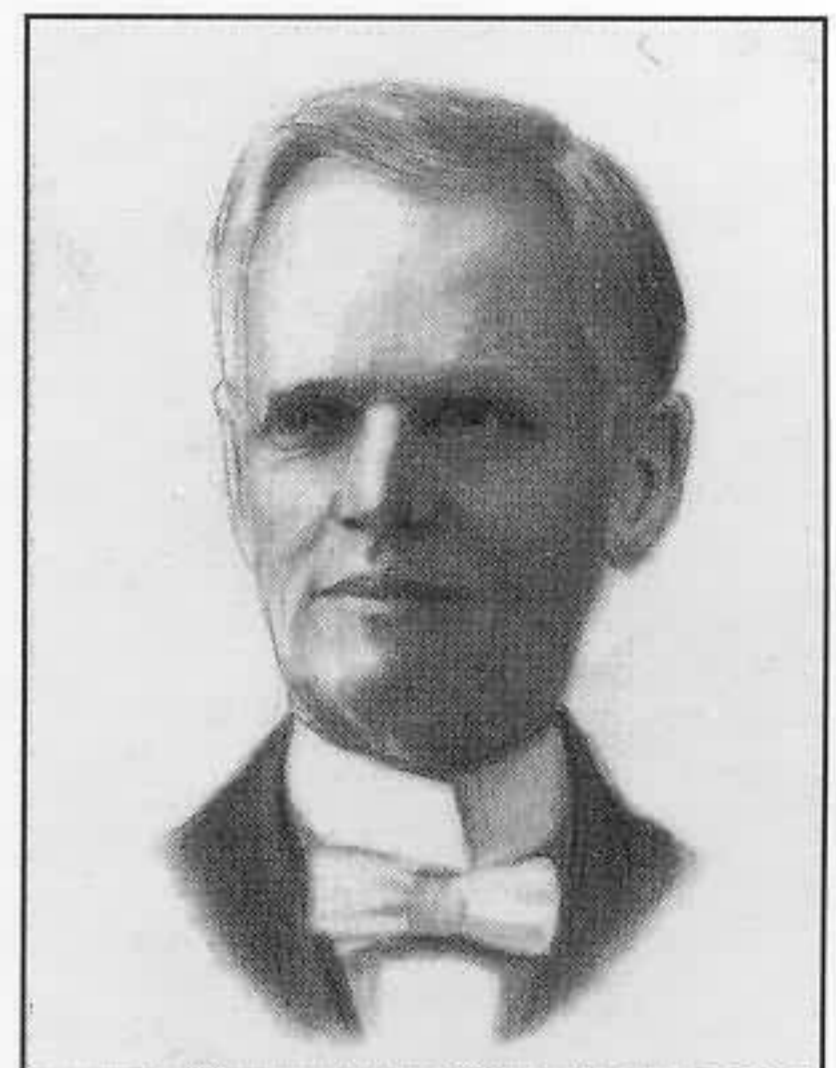
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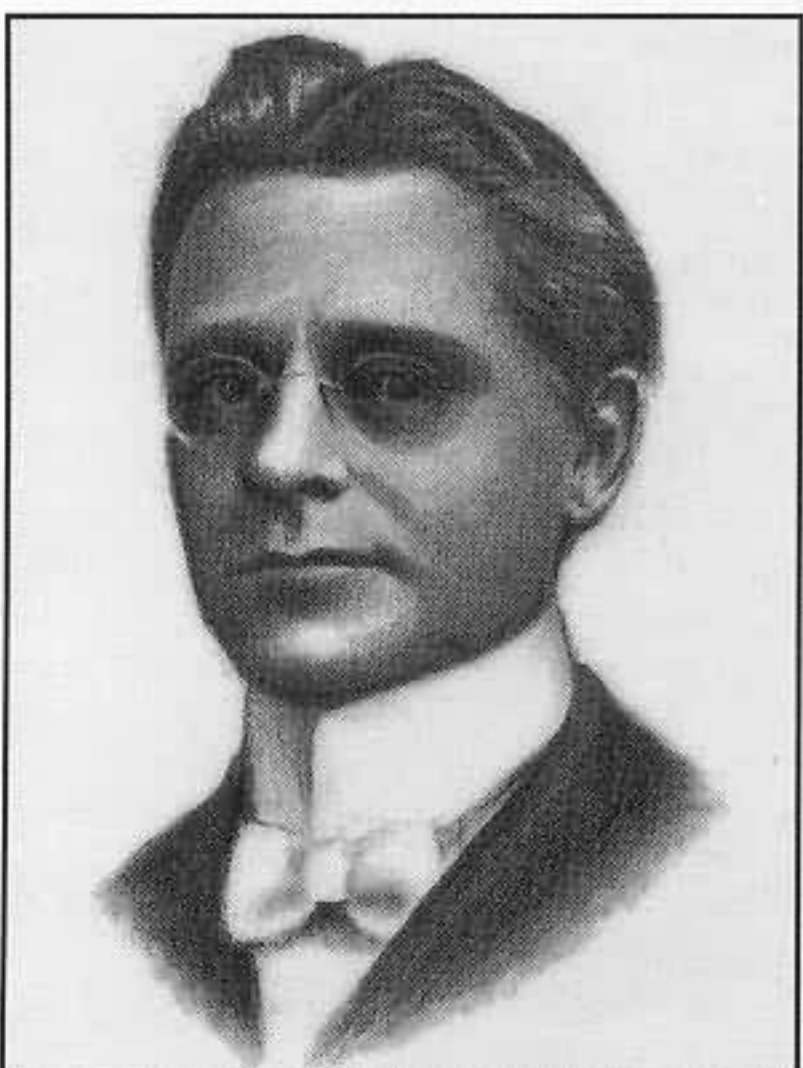
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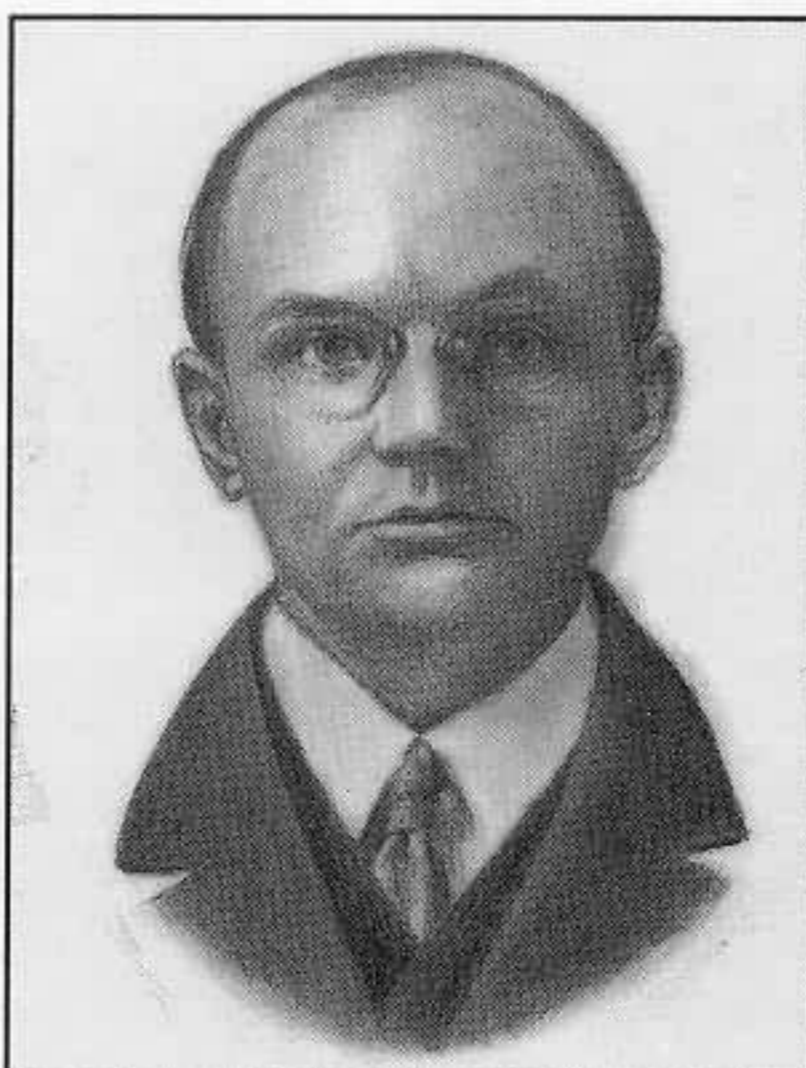
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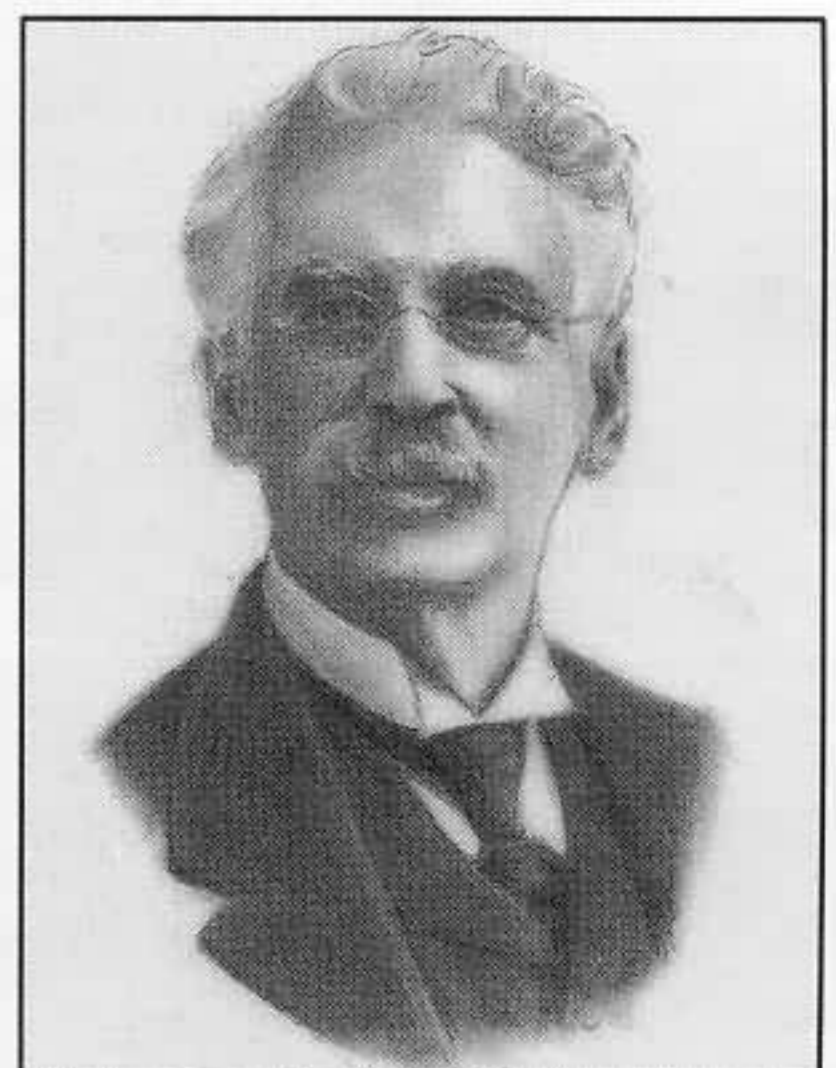
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I. W. Pierson

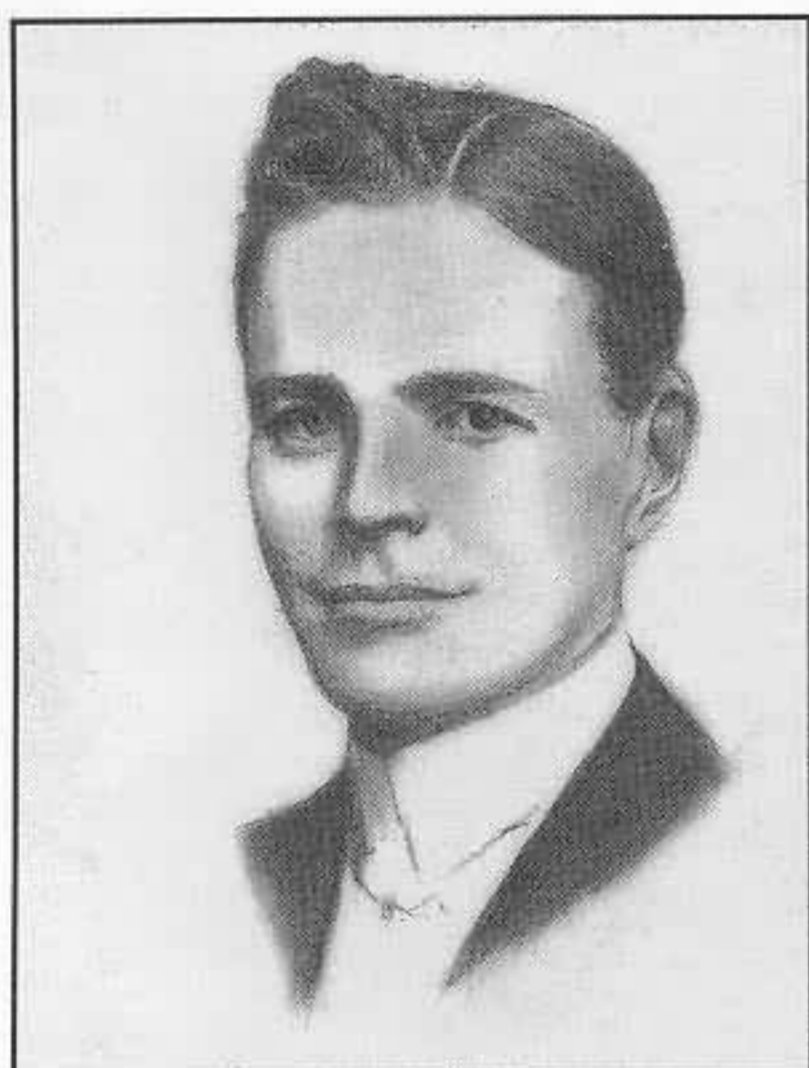


F. O. Pinks



I. S. Preston





Charles W. Ransom



J. K. Renshaw



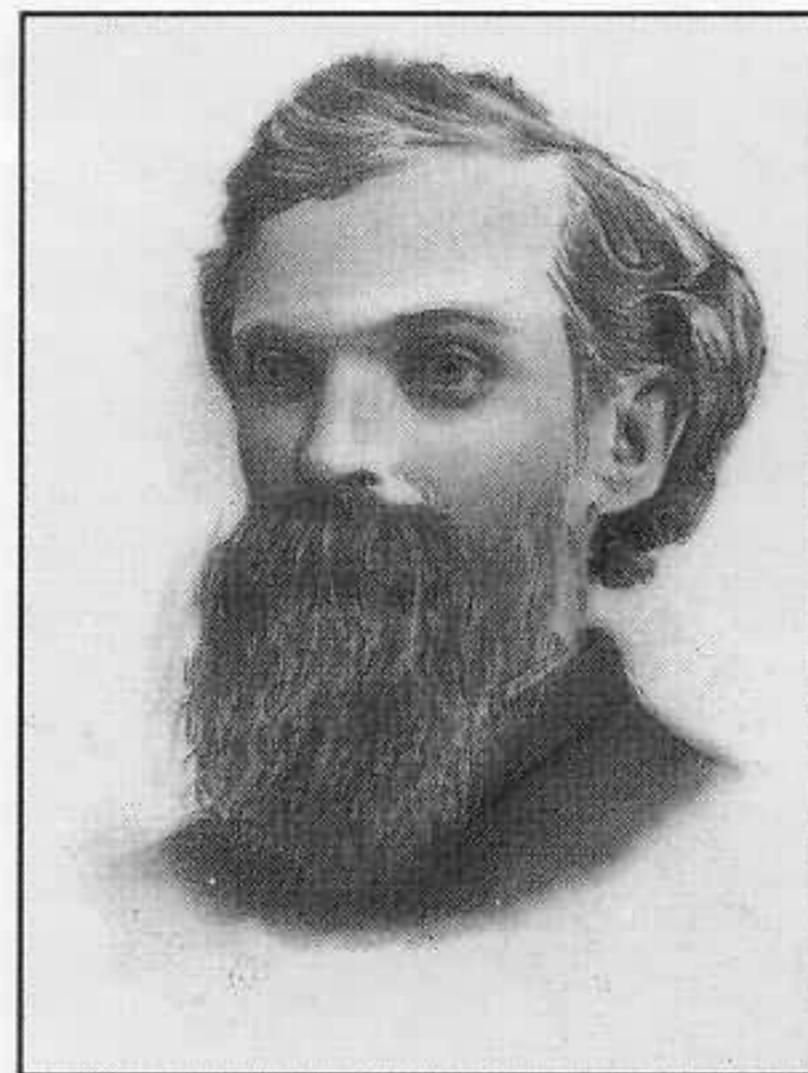
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Frederick D. Richardson



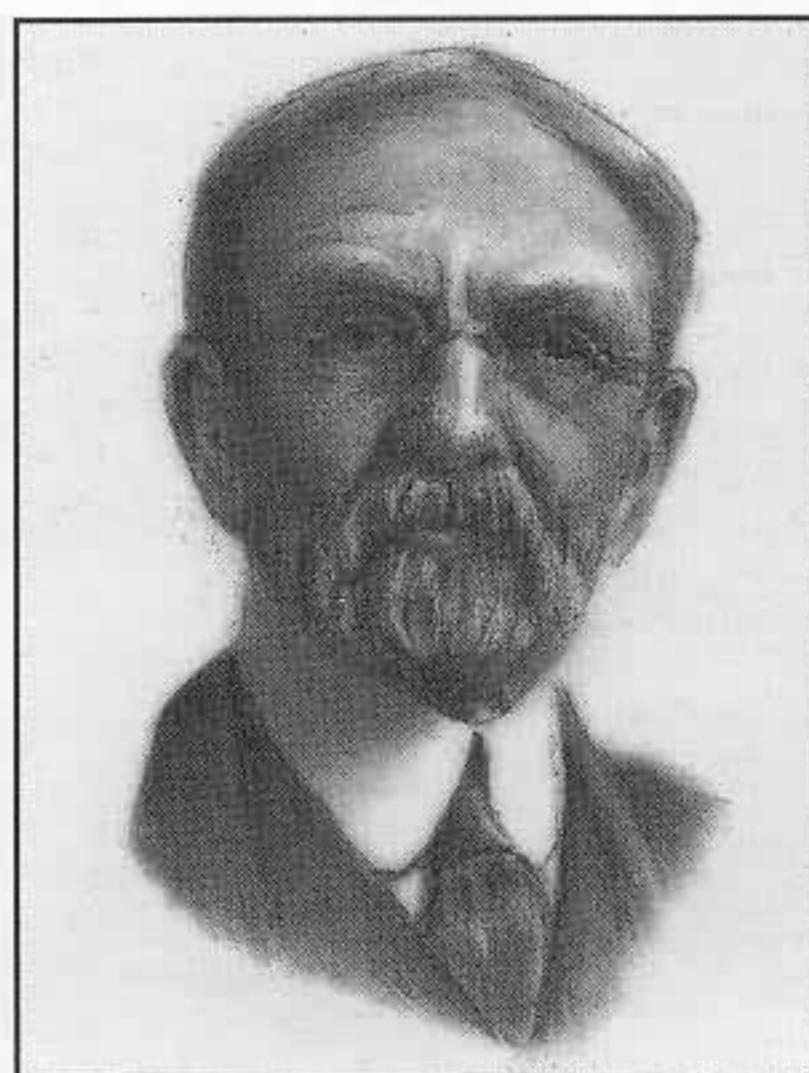
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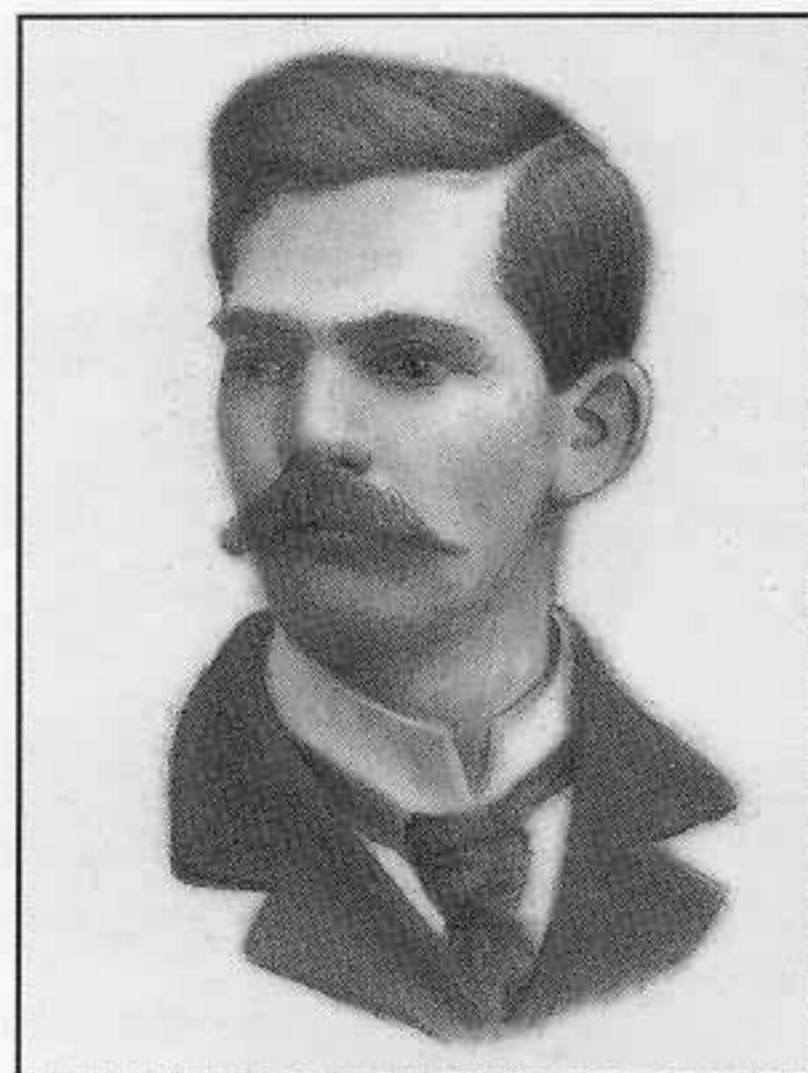
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J. A. Savage

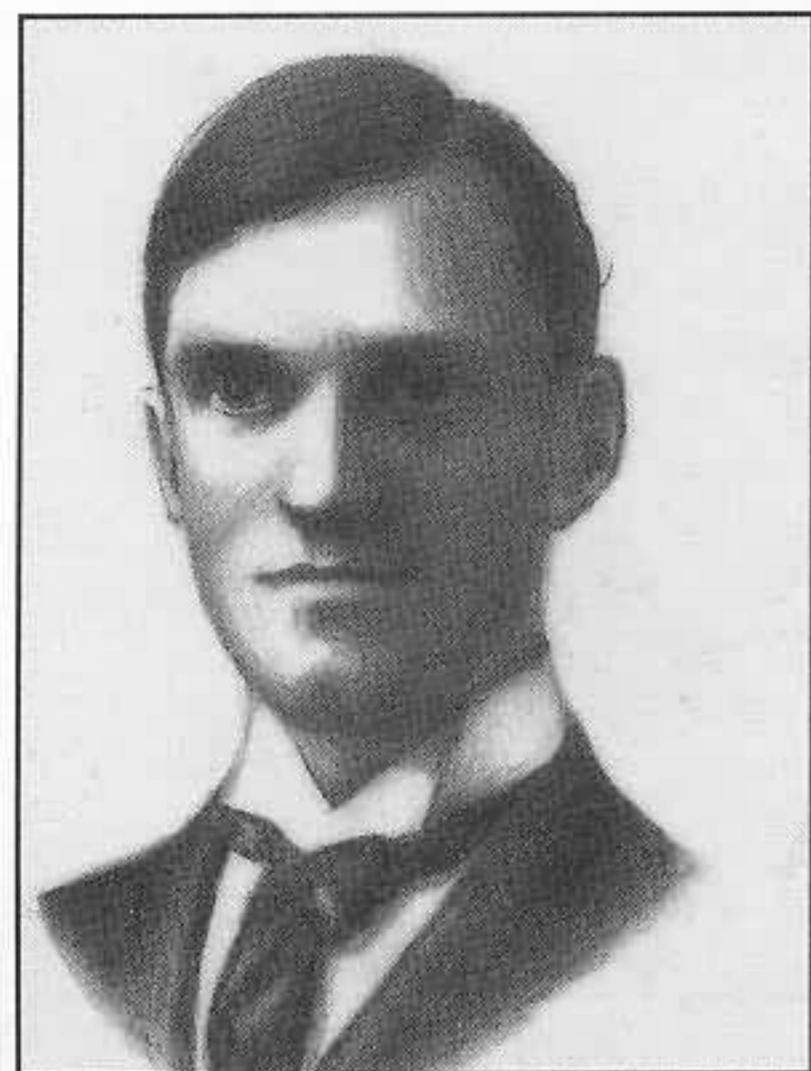


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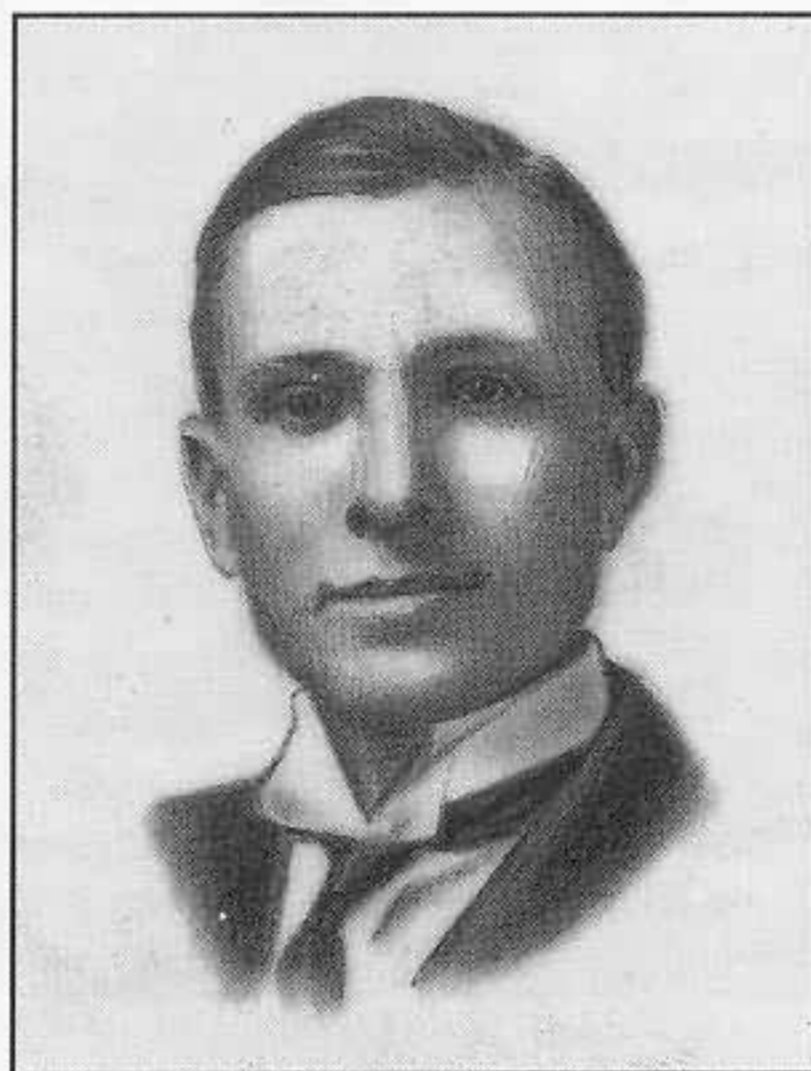


John F. Siple





Arthur Skeeles



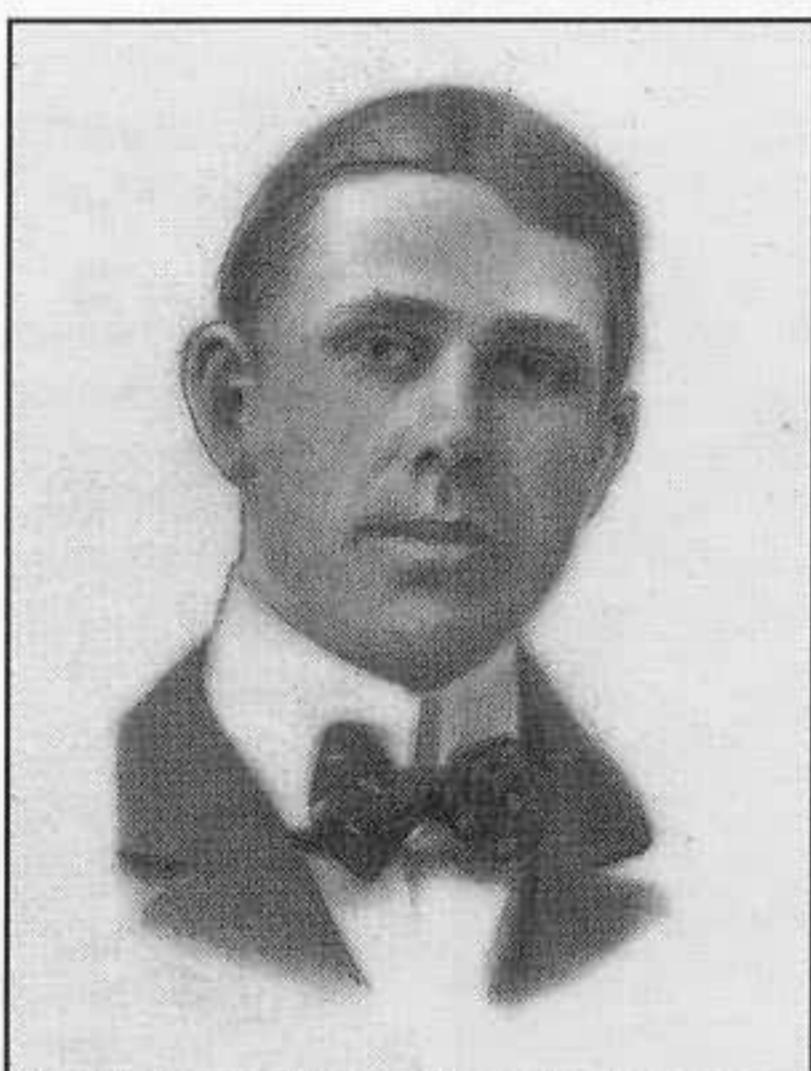
A. T. Smith



Stanley O. Smith



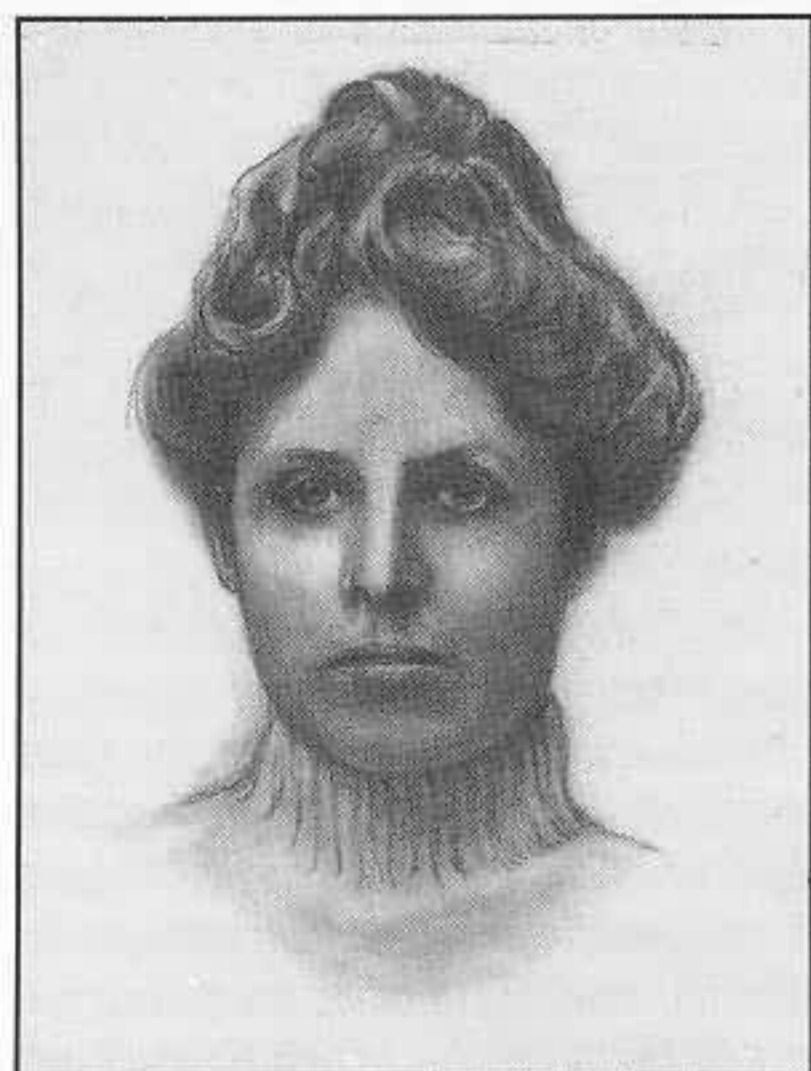
Sara Spencer



L. E. Stacy



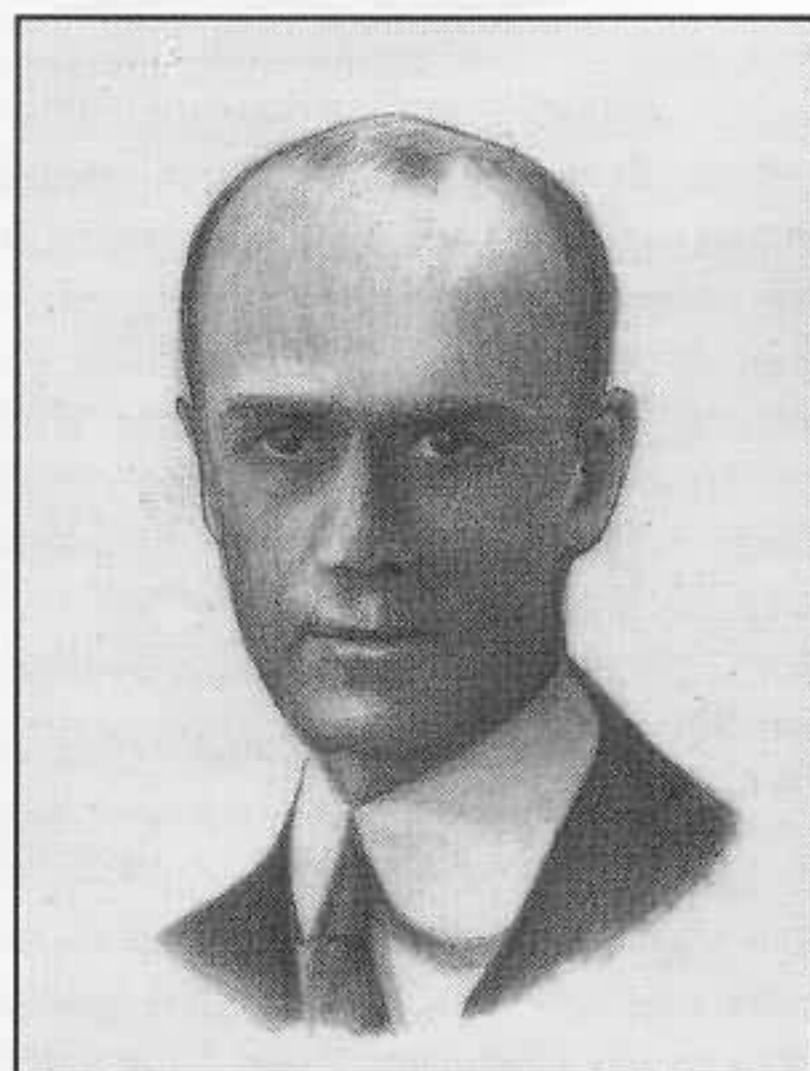
A. H. Steadman



Anna Stutt-Gittins

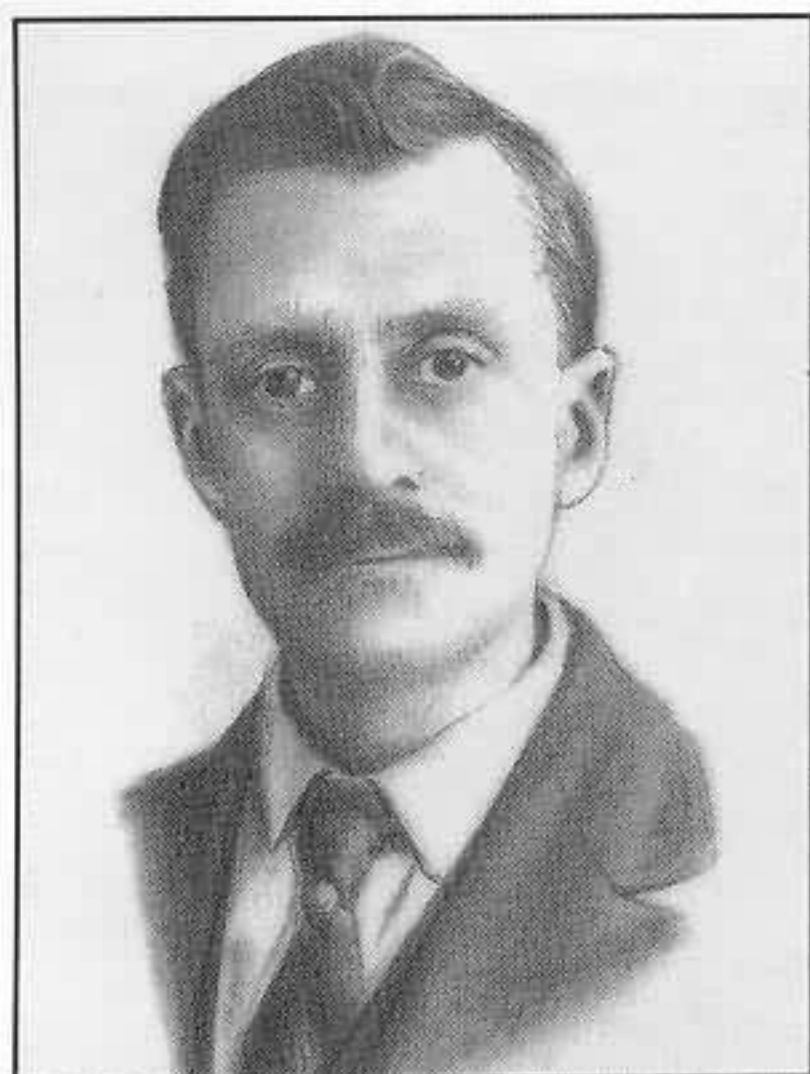


J. A. Stryker



T. M. Tevis





Francis L. Tower



Leland Watkins



Alva M. Wonnell



J. C. Ryan, known as "the Handless Penman," was an individual who overcame a personal handicap and earned his place in the Penman's Hall of Fame. One of his close friends was Warner C. Brownfield. Excerpts from two of his letters\* to Brownfield indicate that he was, indeed, an optimistic person. One of these letters dated June 26, 1917, said: "I am doing the biggest business in my life . . . I am getting 35¢ per dozen for cards; 50¢ with address, so that is a good price." The other, dated September 16, 1916 read: "I am back in good old Missouri. Business is good. I called on Tamblin, a fine fellow."

On September 14, 1917, the following article\*\* was

### J. C. Ryan "The Handless Penman"

written by Brownfield and published in the Park City Daily News, Bowling Green, Kentucky:

... Yesterday I saw in your paper the results of an interview with J. C. Ryan, the handless penman. He has been here twice before and as hardly a week goes by that someone does not ask me about him, I am taking the liberty of answering some of the questions.

To begin with, he is an optimist, he is a prodigious worker and a quick worker. He has patience, a world of it, but not lazy patience. He lost his hands in a Dakota blizzard when about 22 years of age. After several years of sad and almost hopeless effort to learn to work again he went on the road with a show. There he learned to write with his feet, but as that was very inconvenient, he tried using the stumps of his arms. With this method he has been quite successful as his work attests. When I first met him I found him studying from the ornamental writing of the greatest of all ornamental writers, the late L. Madarasz. Having been a personal student of Madarasz, I explained the methods he used and some of the finer points on movement used in the finest professional writing. For this he seems to feel indebted and deeply grateful.

He travels from city to city and has in his time met and called on all the best penmen of the profession. He knows all their secrets of working and is a master at handling ink and putting it into condition.

The movement he uses is mainly body motion flowing out through both arms, though his left arm does most of the propelling. The resting of his arms and rolling on the muscles with precision gives him much the same control gotten by the best professional penmen through aid of the fingers. His life is an example of courage and should be an inspiration to those who have hands and don't train them. He has earned, not with his hands, but with his stumps, as much as \$30 a day writing cards.

\*The Penman's News Letter, Vol. 7, No. 3, January, 1974

\*\*ibid



## PENMAN'S HALL OF FAME

### Roster Of Master Penmen For Whom No Photographs Have Been Found

R. W. Ballentine  
E. M. Barler  
J. F. Barnhart  
Enrique Benguria  
Theodore Bondy  
C. E. Chamberlin  
J. G. Christ  
M. Otero Colmenero  
E. M. Coulter  
E. C. Enriquez  
S. B. Fahnstock  
Lester L. Fields  
Walter Filling

J. F. Fish  
E. O. Folsom  
J. A. Francis  
J. M. Frashier  
H. D. Goshert  
A. M. Grove  
G. E. Gustafson  
J. Vreeland Haring  
W. A. Hoffman  
George G. Hoole  
Oscar E. Hoovis  
E. W. Jones  
L. W. Karlen

Raymond Kasten  
A. W. Kimpson  
R. C. King  
D. E. Knowles  
James K. Lowe  
S. C. Malone  
E. E. Marlatt  
R. N. Marrs  
Rev. Kelvin McCray  
E. G. Miller  
E. J. O'Sullivan  
H. W. Patten  
Claude Rhinehard

Howard C. Rice  
J. D. Rice  
C. L. Ricketts  
Charles J. Romont  
Milton H. Ross  
A. T. Sprott  
Charles E. Sorber  
D. L. Stoddard  
H. W. Strickland  
Adrian B. Tolley  
H. J. Walter  
J. A. Wesco  
F. W. H. Wieseahn

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## THE END OF AN ERA

**In many ways, the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship quietly died away, without a sound, into America's history books. The days of the itinerant penman—those nomadic individuals who roamed from town to town throughout the countryside, teaching penmanship wherever they went were over. The industrial wheels of progress began turning faster and faster, and typewriters, as well as other forms of mechanized/electronic communication, found their way into every business office on the continent.**

Correspondence courses in penmanship continued for a few decades; F. W. Tamblyn, C. W. Ransom and L. H. Hausam being the primary leaders in this form of penmanship education. Yet, it was almost as if a "quietness" had swept over the land with regard to penmanship. Some of the penmanship magazines ceased publication, and the newspapers no longer carried advertisements for penmanship instruction or supplies. Fountain pens and then ball point pens, became popular around the time of World War II, and, quite simply, the "new" industrial revolution so intimately associated with the war cause brought about a new era that was far different from the days of Spencer, Madarasz, and Dennis.

### THE PENMEN'S NEWSLETTER

In spite of such industrial progress and the evolution of a more modern society, there were yet a number of master penmen and penmanship devotees still very much alive in post World War II America. Many of these individuals were of retirement age by that time, but their interest in penmanship remained strong, and the fellowship that resulted because of their penmanship ties served as an elixir of life. It was not merely the teaching of letterforms and writing

techniques that drew these people together; it was the history of the penmen, going back to P. R. Spencer; it was the tradition of fellowship and sharing among penmen and business educators, lived out in some seventy years of conventions. In short, it was *the people and the aspect of such sharing.*

In 1949, the Zaner-Bloser Company was considering the discontinuation of the *Business Educator*. After 55 years of service, the *Educator* was the last of the penmanship magazines still in operation. Mr. Robert C. King, a noted engrosser from Minneapolis, called upon several penmen and engrossers to meet in his studio to discuss the possibilities of creating a penmen's newsletter. During December, 1949, the group met and one of the attendees, Major F. O. Anderson, of the Salvation Army, offered to be the new editor of *The Penmen's Newsletter*. The first regular issues began officially with the January, 1950 issue, and among the first subscribers was the famous Edward C. Mills. Major Anderson, a 1909 graduate of the Zanerian, remained the editor for 17 years.

### THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MASTER PENMEN, ENGROSSERS, AND TEACHERS OF HANDWRITING

Among the penmen who were active during the closing years of the 1940s were Frederick and Eileen Richardson, of Ottawa, Canada. The Richardsons were students of Joseph J. Bailey, Canada's finest penman (J. J. Bailey was E. C. Mills' favorite and most successful student), and graduates of the Zanerian College of Penmanship. In the course of over 25 years, Mr. Richardson taught penmanship to



15,000 high school students and hundreds of high school teachers. Mrs. Richardson has also served as an educator of penmanship for many years; Both individuals have honored reputations as master penmen in business writing.

In 1949, while the couple was working on their summer cottage, they discussed the idea of having penmen get together to renew old acquaintances and share ideas. The next year, they did just that. In July, 1950, a group of master penmen gathered with the Richardsons. They were: J. J. Bailey, H. J. Walter from Chicago, Enrique Benguria from Cuba, René Guillard of Evanston, Illinois, and Charles N. Begin from Quebec City. The group decided that they should form an organization to try to do something to restore penmanship in schools. This became their core idea: to improve the handwriting of young people. They elected as their first officers: President, René Guillard; Secretary, Fred Richardson; Treasurer, Eileen Richardson; and Honorary President Enrique Benguria. Mr. Richardson was asked to think of a suitable name for the group. Since the group was composed of representatives from three countries he decided on "The International Association of Master Penman and Teachers of Handwriting." Shortly thereafter, it was decided that the name of the organization should reflect the discipline of engrossing. Thus, the official name became "The International Association of Master Penmen, Engrossers and Teachers of Handwriting."

From the very beginning, the newly-formed association began to attract people, young and old, who shared an interest in penmanship. It has continued in this fashion ever since—40 years to date. The *Penmen's Newsletter* became IAMPETH's (as the group became known) official publication. Major F. O. Anderson, founder of the *Penmen's Newsletter*, served as the newsletter's editor for 17 years, at which time he passed on the responsibilities of editor to Eileen Richardson. The next year, 1968, Major Anderson passed away, but the simple publication he started was in capable hands. Ever since, for 21 years, as of this writing, Mrs. Richardson has published the *Penman's Newsletter*. With the assistance of her husband, Fred, they have exposed thousands of people

to the subject of penmanship. They have shared the traditions, the techniques, and the writing masters with countless subscribers, and in doing so, they have kept the legacy of the Golden Age of Ornamental Penmanship alive.\* To them, and Major Anderson, a great tribute is due.

## CONCLUSION

As this work goes to press and our world looks ahead to the 1990's, several thoughts come to mind. New means of electronic communication are developed almost daily, and there is an accelerated effort to teach children correspondence by pushing buttons on computer keyboards. Simultaneously, there is a decreasing emphasis on teaching them to write well. This is truly unfortunate. Although the advancement of technology has enabled us to correspond in ways unimaginable just a few decades ago, there is yet a need for people to know *how to write*. Both skills—computer usage *and* penmanship—should be encouraged. Practically *no one* goes through any day without having to write something. Handwriting *is not* an outdated skill; it is, rather, a necessary skill for all literate people. Yet—it is a skill *that must be taught*, and therein lies both the challenge and responsibility for our teachers. Already there is a growing interest in homeschooling throughout America, and among homeschooling parents, penmanship instruction is a subject of emphasis.

The days of practicing oval exercises upon a blackboard are gone now, as are the common school inkwell and pen. This statement, although true, should not infer that it is less than important for us to know about the penmen of old—about who they were, what they did, and more significantly, what they have left for us—the new stewards of handwriting. The penmen and their times are part of our heritage; they are part of us. If nothing else, amid the hectic pace of daily living, this we should remember.

\*The address for *The Penmen's News Letter* will be found under *Sources for Supplies* in the appendix.





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## EPILOGUE

### The Penmen's First Convention

—Michael R. Sull—

"It was back in the autumn of nineteen-one . . ."  
—I remember my Grandpa's voice—  
"And the times," he'd say "seemed like yesterday,  
And I'd go back, if I had the choice.  
For those were the times of heroes of mine . . ."  
—And before his story was done,  
I was sitting with Zaner, Kelchner and Bloser  
At the Penman's First Convention  
In October of nineteen-one.

In the long, gone days of the century's change  
Excitement filled the air—  
For the word spread around in cities and towns  
As the news travelled everywhere:  
"Come to The Penman's Convention—  
The best of the best will be there . . .",  
And the ads foretold how the secrets of old  
Would be openly shown and shared.

In my mind—I sat at their table,  
And one by one they came in  
With bowties and spats and black silk top hats  
And many a whiskered chin.  
I remember reading their faces  
And connecting each one with a name;  
All those I'd seen in the old magazines  
From the Penman's Hall of Fame.

Near a corner there stood C. C. Lister—  
He was talking with Daniel Ames!  
My gosh—how it seemed to be only a dream,  
Yet I blinked—and it all looked the same!  
Then I heard some involved conversation  
And Courtney raised up his hand—  
"Beat this and you win!" he said with a grin;  
"Beat this—though I doubt if you can!"  
Then from the backroom came a rumble,  
And all the eyes turned to the rear;  
They knew who it was—'twas Lou Madarasz,  
And the talking stopped so they'd hear . . .

"Now I've heard your talk, Mr. Courtney,  
And it's true I admire your skill,  
But you can't really think you do better with ink  
Than I can and I'll show that I will!"  
So the master sat down at the table  
Across from Courtney's own chair,  
And the crowd in the place looked at each penman's face

As a tension was felt in the air.  
Then Courtney's pen flashed out an instant  
And he said with a sneer and a smile—  
"You'll never do better than this single letter;  
Go on—then just rest awhile . . ."

Well, Madarasz let out a confident grin—  
The kind that's known by all men,  
And everyone *knew* what he planned there to do  
The moment he picked up his pen.  
In a second he'd finished his writing  
And tossed the sheet in the air;  
Then I heard him boast—"Beat that or come close . . ."  
As it landed near Courtney's chair.  
So, the two of them went at it—  
Tooth and nail and pen,  
And the likes of that fight have never seen light  
Since that magical night back then.

Then there were others I saw through the dark  
Such as Palmer and Stanley Blue;  
There was R. G. Laird and Willis Baird,  
And C. E. Doner came, too!  
—And of course, nearby a window,  
(I shouldn't have been surprised)  
Were the patriarchs of the penman's art—  
The masters I idolized.  
Huddled in deep conversation  
Were Schofield and Clinton Clark,  
Then Bloser, Zaner and Lloyd E. Kelchner  
Emerged from out of the dark.  
They were speaking with William Dennis—  
The Master Engrosser of all;  
They discussed filigree with E. H. McGhee  
As they walked on down the hall.

There was Paul O'Hara with Chester Cook,  
And Norder with Lupfer and Smith,  
There was Hinman, Martin and Merv Albin  
(Though I don't know who he was with).  
But, Faretra stood near the punch bowl;  
John Griffith wrote out calling cards;  
And Behrensmeyer spoke with another—  
Our old friend René Guillard.  
Wonnell, Siple and Charlton Howe;  
Those masters of strokes so fine—  
And more and more came through the door  
From the years all down the line.



Well, the time wore on into hours  
While I saw them all come and go—  
Flickinger finally met Blanchard;  
Even Gaskell made the Show!  
Williams finally met Healey and Heath,  
Di Gesaré shook hands with Brown,  
And Lehman was chatting with Tamblyn  
As the Friendship Book was rebound.

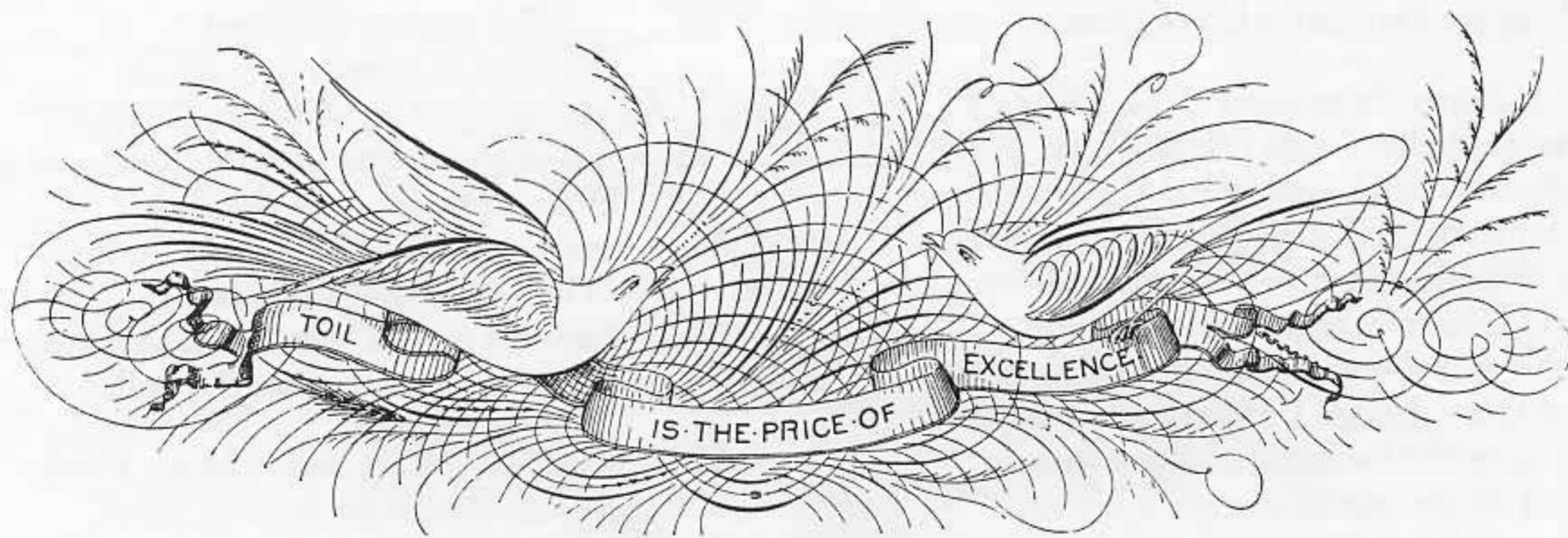
I saw Dakin—that grand old penman,  
And the widely-revered E. C. Mills;  
I saw Shaylor and Wesco and Paul Costello,  
Then suddenly—all was still.  
And a strange air covered their presence  
That seemed to drift like a cloud,  
And the gas lamps flickered as I heard someone whisper:  
“It’s them!” to that wonderful crowd.  
Everyone stopped as if frozen—  
Everyone strained so they’d see—  
‘Twere the ghosts of Spencer and A. D. Taylor,  
As real as real could be!

With a kindly visage of kinship  
They walked—no, they floated around,  
And the longer we stood, it seemed someone should  
Say something, but none made a sound.

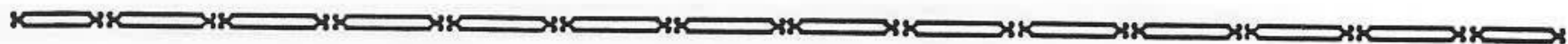
‘Twas as if they spoke to each penman  
And each penman spoke back in return—  
And as time passed away, all that each one could say  
Was “Thank you” for what he had learned.

—And thus was my grandfather’s story  
In the same way he told it to me,  
From the days of my youth when I didn’t need Truth  
To believe that some things *could be*.  
And though Grandpa, like most of the penmen  
Has long since passed away,  
The penman’s art is still in my heart  
As much as it was yesterday.

And yet, when I think for a moment  
Of those times and wonderful men,  
I’m forever held close to the penman’s ghost,  
Just as he was back then.  
Back from the days of his childhood  
When his world was so full of dreams,  
When each one he heard was a gospel word  
And all the more real they seemed.  
Back—way back in the distance  
when the century’d just begun,  
At the Penman’s First Convention  
In October of nineteen-one.







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Francis B. Courtney's "Lessons in  
Dashy Writing"



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## SOURCES FOR SUPPLIES

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### ARTHUR BROWN & BRO., INC.

58-95 Maurice Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378  
Outside New York: 1-800-237-0619  
New York: (718) 779-6464

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### ISAAC WELDON BULLOCK

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### WILLIAM A. LILLY

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papers, related sup-  
plies for calligraphers

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### NEWSLETTER

The Penman's News Letter  
c/o Mrs. Eileen Richardson  
From June–October: 34 Broadway Avenue, Ottawa, Canada K1S 2V6  
From November–May: R1, Box 462, Dunnellon, FL 32630

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### WORKSHOP

The Spencerian Saga  
3520 W. 75th Street, Suite 100, Prairie Village, KS 66208



## PATENT FOR MORDAN & BROCKEDON'S OBLIQUE PENHOLDER DESIGN

A.D. 1831 . . . . . No. 6163.

### Pens and Penholders

#### MORDAN AND BROCKEDON'S SPECIFICATION.

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, we, SAMPSON MORDAN, of Castle Street East, Finsbury Square, In the County of Middlesex, Engineer, and WILLIAM BROCKEDON, of Devonshire Street, Queen Square, in the same County, Esquire, send greeting.

WHEREAS His present most Excellent Majesty King William the Fourth, by His Letters Patent under the Great Seal of Great Britain, bearing date at Westminster, the Twentieth day of September, in the second year of His reign, did, for Himself, His heirs and successors give and grant unto us, the said Sampson Mordan and William Brockedon, His especial licence, sole privilege and authority, that we, the said Sampson Mordan and William Brockedon, our exors, admors, and assigns, or such others as we, the said Sampson Mordan and William Brockedon, our exors, admors, and assigns, should at any time agree with, and no others, from time to time and at all times during the term of years therein mentioned, should and lawfully might make, use, exercise, and vend, within England, Wales, and the Town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, our Invention of "CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF WRITING PENS AND PENHOLDERS, AND IN THE METHODS OF USING THEM;" in which said Letters Patents is contained a proviso that we, the said Sampson Mordan and William Brockedon, or one of us, shall cause a particular description of the nature of our said Invention, and in what manner the same is to be performed, to be inrolled in His said Majesty's High Court of Chancery within two calendar months next and immediately after the date of the said in part recited Letters Patent, as in and by the same, reference being thereunto had, will more fully and at large appear.

NOW KNOW YE, that in compliance with the said proviso, we, the said Sampson Mordan and William Brockedon, do hereby declare that the nature of our said Invention, and the manner in which the same is to be performed, are particularly described and ascertained in and by the Drawing hereunto annexed, and in the following description thereof (that is to say):—

We claim, as our Invention and the object of this Patent, the use of obliquely slit pens made of quills, metals, or any other fit and proper materials, and also the use of oblique holders for common pens, and whether such pens are made of quills, metals, or other fit and proper materials, and which said penholders are constructed by us especially for the purpose of holding the said common pens in an oblique position, and the advantages of which said oblique position of the slits of the pens so made or held, will be to enable the writer to use his pen with greater personal ease and freedom, and that the pens when so held will be much more durable, and chiefly in consequence of the equal wear upon both the nibs forming the point of the pen, and which nibs, from the oblique position in which by our Invention they will be presented to paper or other materials to be written upon, are both brought equally to bear upon such paper or other materials. We propose in the formation of our oblique pens, whether made of quills, metals or other fit and proper materials, that the slit shall be made or placed in the direction of the usual line or slope of the letters, and also that in our penholders the slits of common pens, whether made of quills, metals or other fit and proper materials, shall be held in a similar oblique position, the penholders being so formed as to enable the writer to fix in the holder a common pen, with the usual slit, but in which holder it will be used with the slit held in an oblique position, and thus we are enabled to correct what we conceive has hitherto been an evil, namely, the faulty direction in which the points of pens have been commonly presented to the paper or other materials employed, so that the nibs which form the point have not hitherto been equally used or acted upon, either in the up or the down stroke in writing. By our improved modes of



## APPENDIX 2

forming or holding pens obliquely, the pressure of the pen being equal on both sides of the slit, the nibs are rendered less liable to separate, or open on the up stroke of the pen, and thus the spurting of the ink will be considerably diminished, if not altogether avoided, as well as the gathering of filaments from the surface of the paper or other material written upon, which produces, in the ordinary position of pens, the blotting or smearing of the writing; and we hereby claim as our Invention the oblique direction or position purposely given to the slits of all pens, whether made of quills, metals, or other fit and proper materials, and also the obliquity produced in the use of common pens, whether made of quills, metals, or other fit and proper materials, when held in our oblique penholders.

Having thus described the nature and objects of our said Invention, we shall proceed to afford some examples of methods of carrying the same into effect by a reference to, and a description of, the several Figures contained in the Drawing, which as aforesaid is annexed to this Specification. Not, however, meaning or intending thereby to limit ourselves to the use of those forms only, but we hereby claim as our Invention, all pens with oblique slits, and all penholders by which common pens may be held in an oblique position, thus including all pens in which, or methods of using them by which, the slit may be held obliquely or in the line or slope of the letters whilst writing with them in the usual way.

In the said Drawing, Figure 1 represents an upper view of part of a common quill made into one of our improved pens with an oblique slit; Figure 2 being an under view of the same pen; Figure 3, a portable quill pen with an oblique slit, and Figure 4 a section thereof. This oblique portable pen may be either held in any of the usual penholders, as well as the steel or other elastic metal oblique portable pen shewn at Figure 5, or still better in one we have contrived for the purpose, and which is shewn in an upper view of it in Figure 6, and in a side view in Figure 7, it being different from the common well-known penholders of this kind in the shells between which the pen is held, being placed sufficiently on one side to bring the point of our obliquely nibbed pen in a central line with the handle; Figure 8 is an under view of an ordinary portable quill pen, and Figure 9 a steel or other metallic ordinary portable pen. These ordinary portable quill, steel, or other metallic pens with straight (not oblique) slits, may be held by our holders in our improved oblique position in various ways; Figure 10 represents a common portable quill pen held in one of our oblique penholders, an edge view of which is shewn in Figure 11, it consisting of two elastic or springing metal limbs united at one end to a metal socket, into which a handle of hard wood or other fit and suitable material may be fitted. The front ends or jaws of these limbs are curved as shewn in Figure 11, so as to receive between them a common portable quill or metal pen, and which said pen when placed in its proper position in the penholder, may be held or retained firmly therein by sliding the double-headed button, which moves in a slit made in both limbs, near to the said front ends or jaws, so as to close them and bind the pen fast between them. In order to hold a common quill pen with its barrel and stem entire, or the common metal pen in an oblique position, we vary the shape of one of the limbs of the penholder, so as to make it similar to the opposite one, but curved in the contrary direction, and as shewn in the edge view thereof in Figure 12. Another penholder, to retain the ordinary portable quill or metal pens in an oblique position, is shewn in a top view of it in Figure 13, and in an edge view thereof in Figure 14, it being formed of a solid metal stem, having a socket to receive a hard wood or other handle, and of a moveable limb turning upon a hinge or joint at its external end, both parts being properly curved so as to hold the portable pen between them, and as shewn in Figure 13. This moveable limb is retained in its closed position by sliding a metal ring or ferril over its end, as shewn in Figures 13 and 14; and in order to adjust the best oblique position of the pen, it may be provided with a joint furnished with a tightening screw, as shewn in Figure 15. It may likewise be made to hold the common entire quill pens in an oblique position, by altering the curvature of the moveable limb in the manner shewn in Figure 16; Figure 17 is another penholder adapted for holding common quill or metal portable pens in an oblique position; and Figure 18 is an under view of the same; Figure 19 is a short tubular and tapering plug fitted into the socket or tube of Figures 17 and 18, and having a projecting stud upon it which fits into a slit made in the socket or tube of Figure 18, and prevents the plug from turning round in that socket. A screw is formed upon the stem of the plug, Figure 19, which passes through a hole made to receive it in the end of the socket of Figures 17 and 18, and has a female screw



or button, Figure 20, with a milled border to be screwed upon it when the screw is passed through the hole in the socket. A portable pen may then be placed between the plug and the socket, as shewn in Figure 17, and upon binding the female screw tight the pen will be firmly secured in the penholder. In order to allow more motion endways to the adjustment of the pen in the penholder, the socket of Figure 17 may be made separate or without a handle, as shewn in Figure 21, and be received into an oblique springing socket or clip with a handle affixed to it, similar to that shewn in the side view of it, Figure 22, and in the end view, Figure 23; Figure 24 is a top view, and Figure 25 an edge view, of one of our oblique pens made of a flat piece of steel or other fit and proper material; the nibs A, A, being elastic to the degree required, and the cheeks B, B, forming an exterior addition to the surface of the pen to hold a greater quantity of ink. The edges C, C, as shewn in the separate Figures 26 and 27, may be bevelled for the greater convenience of placing them in the penholder, Figures 24 and 25, which has flattened jaws adapted to receive these pens, but which flattened penholder we do not claim; Figure 27 shews one of these pens with only one additional check B to it, the left nib being removed to shew better the point of the pen in use; Figures 28 and 29 are side and top views of metal pens formed by giving to such pens as are represented in Figures 26 and 27, a convex or arched upper surface for the purpose of obtaining a greater degree of stiffness in the parts requiring it. These pens may be used in the common penholders. By a reference to our Figures it will be seen that the obliquely slit pens and those held in our oblique penholders, are required to be so fixed as that the points of the pens shall be placed for convenient use in the central line or axis of the handles of the penholders; we do not mean or intend hereby to claim as our Invention any of the various parts herein mentioned, or in the Drawing annexed shewn and described, which are already known, or have been in use, but only oblique pens, and whether the said obliquity be obtained by holders formed for holding the common or straight slit pens in an oblique position, or by forming the pens themselves with oblique slits.

In witness whereof, we, the said Sampson Mordan and William Brockedon, have hereunto set our hands and seals, this Sixteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and thirty-one.

SAMPSON (L.S.) MORDAN.

WILLIAM (L.S.) BROCKEDON.

AND BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the Sixteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord 1831, the aforesaid Sampson Mordan and William Brockedon came before our said Lord the King in His Chancery, and acknowledged the Specification aforesaid, and all and every thing therein contained and specified, in form above written. And also the Specification aforesaid was stamped according to the tenor of the Statute made for that purpose.

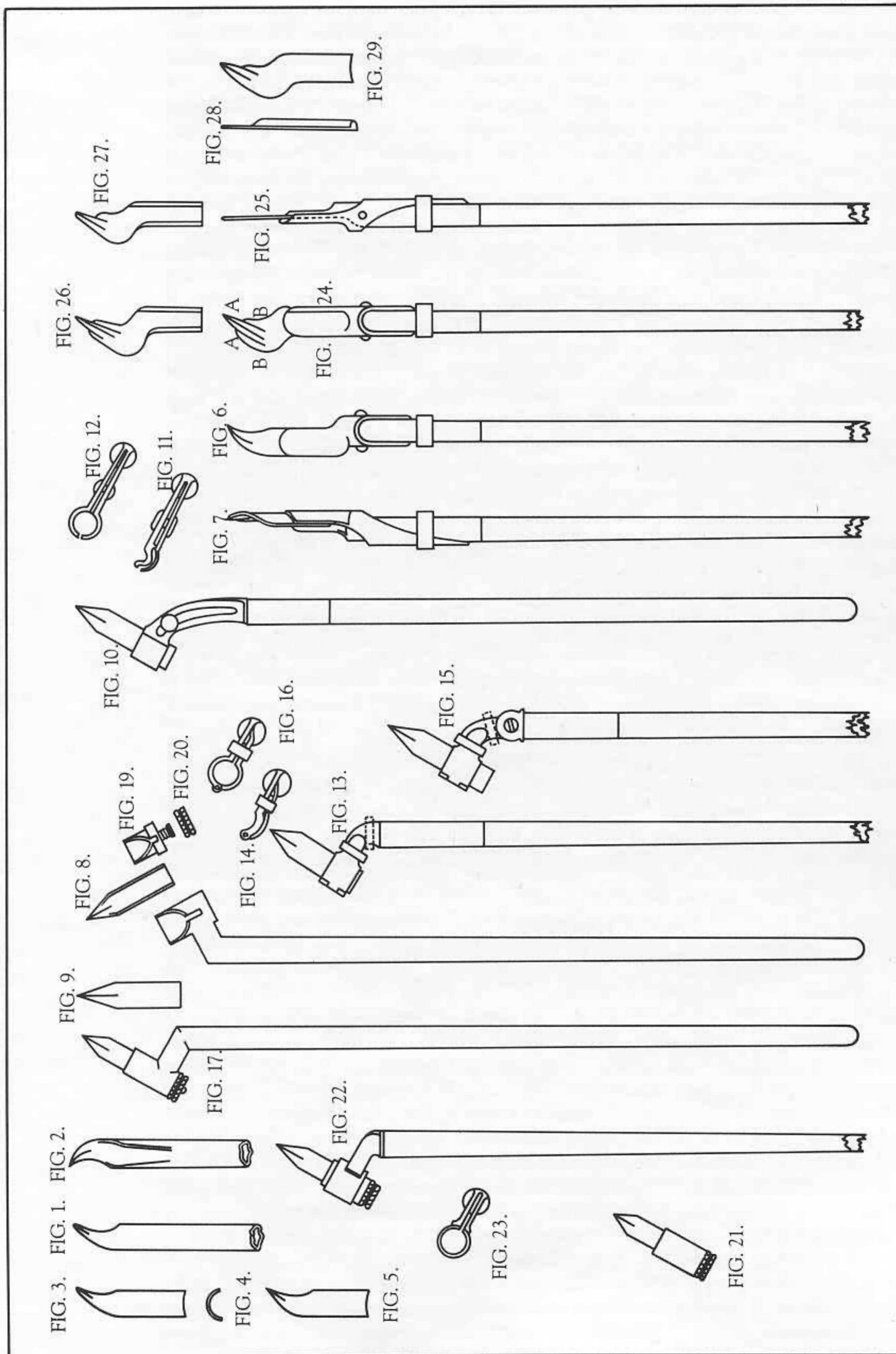
Inrolled the Sixteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and thirty-one.

LONDON:

Printed by George Edward Eyre and William Spottiswoode,  
Printers to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty. 1857.



A.D. 1831, Sep. 20, No. 6:63.  
MORDAN & BROCKEDON'S SPECIFICATION.



LONDON: Printed by George Edward Eyre and William Spottiswoode.  
Printers to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, 1857.





**APPENDIX 3**  
AUTHOR'S NOTE  
THE POETRY OF  
PLATT R. SPENCER

In my effort to present a thorough biographical account of the life of Platt Rogers Spencer, it is significant that a collection of his recorded poetry be included in this text. Spencer's love for poetry and his creative skill at composing verse was nearly as well known as his penmanship. Most of the poems that follow have never been published. Additional information regarding this aspect of the famed penman's life is related in the following preface by Lyman P. Spencer, dated May 30, 1893.



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## APPENDIX 3

### PREFACE TO POEMS

The following copies of my Father's poems I have had made not only for my own gratification and use, but that I may leave them in the hands of my children, by whom I trust they may be carefully treasured and transmitted to their descendants.

In the family of my grandfather Spencer, there was a decided poetic vein. It showed itself not only in my father, but in his brothers Barzillai, Dr. Daniel and Harvey Spencer, all of whom left verses well worth reading and preservation. Of the last three, my uncle Harvey, especially, dropped easily and naturally into poetic expression, and his productions often have a quaint and original flavor, rare and very enjoyable.

In the next generation that same poetic propensity shows itself in Adelia and Sucinda, daughters of Dr. Daniel Spencer, in Warren P., son of Harvey, and my sister Sara. These have written numerous beautiful short poems, of which many have been published in the periodical press. The source of this poetic tendency we have been unable to trace.

Though my father wrote on all sorts of themes and under all sorts of conditions, he seemed particularly fond of doing his literary work late in the evening, when the rest of the family had retired for the night. Then it was when the house was quiet, with his spectacles adjusted, his faithful pen in hand, and his table lighted by numerous candles fitted with paper reflectors, he would indite those graceful verses and genial letters, so much prized by his friends.

He composed his verses easily, often jotting them down in his "scratch hand" (as he called it) on stray bits of paper; and as first written he was generally content to leave them, without much effort afterwards to prune, elaborate or perfect them. A few of his poems, however, give evidence of subsequent revision and changes, resulting in more than one version of them.

Much that he wrote he seemed to value lightly, and took little pains to preserve. He often gave his verses to his friends or furnished them to newspapers, without retaining copies. Many of these have been recovered; but some that he is known to have written, cannot now be found. For instance, the poem, "Reply to Perrigrine's Farewell to his Harp," attributed to Mr. Harris, seems to imply the existence of verses by my father with the title the reply refers to. It has, however, disappeared.

A lady who lives in Kingsville tells that when she was a young woman, my father called one day at the house where she was and found her engaged washing dishes. Taking a seat he wrote some verses on that subject, which he handed her as he went out. To another lady in Kingsville he addressed a poem on the occasion of the birth of her eldest son. She treasured it many years, and it was the first thing the son learned to read. But this, as well as the lines mentioned above, finally disappeared. Some of these stray pieces may still come to light, but a considerable number are probably beyond recovery.

The greater part of his poems, however, were found in two scrap-books which he left, or were collected by special effort immediately after his decease. These have been carefully kept by my brother Robert, whose active interest has resulted in increasing the collection by a large number of additional pieces found in the old files of Buffalo, Cleveland and other newspapers or in the hands of our father's old friends and correspondents. From this collection, which has been kindly loaned me for the purpose, the copies of this book are taken.

The careful preservation of these copies is the more needful, inasmuch as the poems have not and may never be published in book form, and there exists besides this but one other collection of them equally complete. So that, without due precaution, an accident or two, such as frequently occurs, might result in a loss that would prove irreparable.

From my dear Father's writings and the contemplation of his life, I have derived, as have also many others, much pleasure and profit. It is my hope that my children may receive from them equal benefit and enjoyment; and that there may be awakened and fostered in them the same virtues that make the memory of their grandfather Spencer a green spot in the recollections of those that knew him.

Lyman P. Spencer  
Newark, N.J., May 30, 1893



## Ode to Writing

Blest be "the Art" that kindly flings  
 The voice of love through space and time,  
 Gives friendship's offerings tireless wings  
 To waft their gems from clime to clime.

By it, through history's fadeless page,  
 The virtuous and heroic name,  
 In living lines from age to age,  
 Burns o'er our path in beacon flame.

Light of the world! it sheds the beams  
 Of knowledge broad as earth and sea;  
 And from the land of doubt and dreams  
 Leads truth and science pure and free.

Then hail, blest Art! thy labors still  
 Shall bind our hearts in friendship's chain,  
 Servant of Genius, mind and will,  
 All other arts are in thy train.

## Primary Ode to Writing

Tune—"Bonny Boat"

I'll do my best to learn to write,  
 As well as read and spell  
 And then, a letter I'll indite,  
 To little Mary Bell.

We used to play in summer day,  
 Beneath the old elm tree;  
 And though she now is far away,  
 I know she thinks of me.

I know when Mary learns to write,  
 Each letter will be fair;  
 And twined in words with tendrils light,  
 Like her own waving hair.

And all her thoughts will be as bright,  
 And pure as pure can be,  
 And when I do to Mary write,  
 I know she'll write to me.

## Ode to the Pen

Tune—"Auld Lang Syne"

Hail, Servant Pen! to thee we give  
 Another pleasant hour—  
 'Tis thine to bid our memories live,  
 And weave our thoughts in flowers!

The pen, the pen, the brave old pen  
 Which stamped our thoughts of yore,  
 Through its bold tracings oft again  
 Our thoughts will freshly pour.

In school-day scenes and social bowers,  
 It paints our visions gay,  
 And yields to life's declining hours,  
 A solace in decay.

Then be thy movements bold and true,  
 Friend of the laboring mind;  
 Light, shade and form entrance the view  
 And glow thro' every line.

## Lines from a Copy-Book Cover

There is beauty in that letter,  
 Which my sister wrote to me;  
 No hand can trace one better—  
 More easy, plain and free.

With roseleaf curves her capitals  
 Are shaped of graceful lines,  
 And every speaking image blent  
 With undulating vines.

The harmony of curve and slope,  
 Is graced by tasteful shade;  
 Her heart seems in the picture-work  
 Her gentle hand has made.

She used to say, "Dear Brother!"  
 With a rich, ingenious air;  
 Now she writes the words so neatly,  
 Her voice seems speaking there.



## APPENDIX 3

### To Miss S.M.M.

Lady, thou art not, yet thou art  
So like a friend that's far away,  
That if thou hast as warm a heart,  
Thou claim'st the Poets warmest lay.

Lady, thine eyes are peers of those  
Oft lighted up by friendship's name,  
Each look a kindred spirit shews,  
Fair index of the bosom's flame.

On thee I oft have gazed unseen  
Till that far friend thou seem'd to be;  
My heart has sprang amid the dream  
And match'd the greeting kiss from thee.

And Lady, such is life's best bliss  
Fair drawn by Fancy's buoyant flame,  
Tis but a dream of happiness,  
A chanting semblance and a name.

Lady, accept this tribute due,  
And as thy form is like that friend's  
Be thou her every virtue too,  
And worth and grace congenial blend.

—Western Bard

### (Untitled)

We never know how we have loved,  
Till what we most loved is departed,  
But the strength of affection is proved,  
By the joyless and desolate hearted.

Our hopes they are born but to die;  
They are linked to our heart but to sever,  
And like stars down a dark sky,  
Shine loveliest when fading forever.

Greenville Sept. 27th, 1827. —Cleonorah

### To Miss M.S. . . .

Away with flattery's luring sound,  
It is the siren of the soul;  
But, tis the vampires deadly wound,  
And steals from common sense, control.

On baubles gay, a thousand suns  
Dance o'er the Ocean's liquid tide;  
One blast, one cloud, and all are gone,  
So flit the airy gems of Pride.

Once on a bush a rose spread forth,  
More fair than all its neighbor's bloom,  
It glowed in beauty, but its worth  
Was only to its neighbors known.

Be such I cried, the modest friend  
Design'd to soothe life's devious rounds;  
There through each grace delight to dwell,  
Nor Pride nor vanity, be found.

Maiden, farwell be thine the heart,  
Where virtue holds its sweet control;  
Which only can a charm impart,  
And win the homage of a soul.

—Western Bard

### Written in an Album

#### (Untitled)

Beauty is but a fading flow'r,  
And wit a transient gleam,  
Wealth but the solace of an hour,  
And fancy but a dream:  
But when frail beauty, wealth and wit,  
And fancy's dreams subside,  
Virtue shall hold her empire yet,  
And peace with her abide



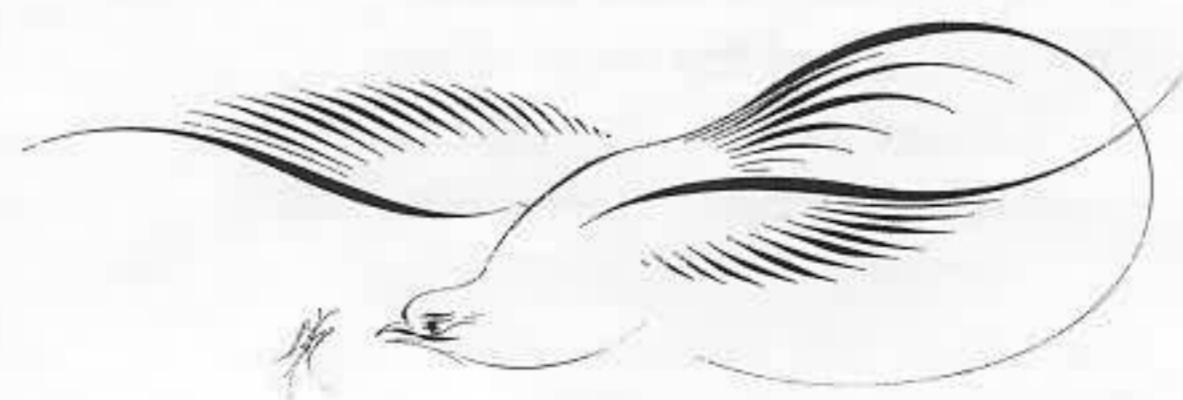
## Monody

When in death I shall low decline,  
 O lay me beneath the willow  
 That hangs o'er the clear and meandering stream,  
 And give me of moss a lillow;  
 Low be the note of the bird of night,  
 Answering the distant billow,  
 That my requiem sings, by the pale moonlight,  
 Perched on the bending willow.  
 Let no rich marble, in sculpture drest,  
 Point out the spot of my sleeping;  
 But the pensive violet grow on my breast,  
 And the lily all faded and weeping.  
 O let not a tear, when the death bell tells,  
 Be seen from the eye descending,  
 And no fond wish that the parted soul  
 Again with its clay were blending.  
 For gone, and alas! fled quickly away  
 Are the hopes of a better to-morrow;  
 The ills that encumber life's comfortless day  
 Have shrouded my bosom in sorrow.  
 Let not the muse, in glowing theme,  
 A line to my mem'ry borrow—  
 Perish my name, like a fleeting dream,  
 Lost in the thoughts of to-morrow.  
 Let no rude foot disturb my rest,  
 Pressing the turf of my dwelling,  
 Marring the flower on my lowly breast,  
 And silence from thence dispelling.  
 But the footsteps of friendship may silently come,  
 When twilight grey is closing,  
 May mingle a sigh with the wild bird's moan,  
 O'er the spot where the youth is reposing.  
 Not in the vaults of illustrious dead,  
 Fam'd for their earthly glory,  
 But low in the valley rest my head,  
 Nor my memory live in story.  
 Then bury me by the purling stream,  
 and give me of moss a pillow,  
 Where the wild bird may warble my  
 requiem theme,  
 Perch'd on the bending willow.

(1823)

## (Untitled)

It is ignorance of their being, here below  
 Thoughtless, they think not, know not what  
 they are,  
 And in the glass of ignorance, shine fair.  
 Is the day far, O man? or is it night  
 When thou and all thy earthly hopes shall  
 die?  
 O then thou art to vice the veriest slave,  
 That hast no hopes of bliss beyond the  
 grave!  
 Look on thyself, abhor thyself in dust,  
 An atom, yet a giant still unjust.  
 If there's a God, and a Religion too,  
 That God is worthy, that Religion true,  
 If thou must die, thy spirit takes its flight  
 To scenes of bliss or everlasting night;  
 And if Religion can the bosom warm,  
 And point to heaven a never failing charm,  
 And to thy maker, to thy God on high,  
 Whose presence gilds the mansions of the  
 sky,  
 Why not at once, if on thy choice  
 depends  
 Thy future bliss and thine eternal end,  
 Turn thy wild footsteps, from the road to  
 death,  
 And praise thy maker with thy every  
 breath?  
 Turn, e'er thy sun shall set in darksome  
 gloom!  
 For no repentance comes to bless the tomb.  
 How inconsistent man myself I prove,  
 Virtue I promise, vice I fondly love.  
 With there reflections laboring at my heart,  
 To-morrow shows the impress they impart.





## APPENDIX 3

### On Parting With A Friend

If one by one our friends depart,  
And they are few at first,  
How soon the solitary heart,  
Sighs for its kindred dust.

For who would ask protracted years  
Without one cheering voice,  
One friend to mingle tear with tear,  
Or smile when we rejoice.

As from the harp successive break  
Its strings, till all are gone,  
So do our toys the soul forsake,  
Nor leave one rapturous tone.

Farwell, Farwell, departing friend,  
Life's stormy ocean past,  
Souls that on earth congenial blend,  
May meet in Heaven at last.

Greenville Sept. 1827. — Western Bard

### Sunday Night in a Strange Land

I hear the songster's notes of glee,  
As evening steals along the vale  
Returning verdure clothes the tree  
And odours swell the southern gale.

How calmly sinks the sun to rest,  
Tinging with gold the western sky,  
And not a cloud on evening's breast  
Darkens the azure vault on high.

Fair Erie's banks at such an hour  
Oft have I roved thy walks along,  
Invoked the Muses magic power,  
And hung upon the seamen's song.

And where fair Virtue science taught  
Illumines clear the female mind  
The captivating charm I've caught  
And votive, bowed at Beauty's shrine.

Scenes that my soul must ever love,  
Blest hour to sacred friendship dear,  
Why were my footsteps brought to rove  
In wild ambitious mad career.

Here spring around her beauty strews,  
Her voice her flowers on every hand,  
Yet fond affection burns and woos  
Her beauty in a distant land.

Here are no feet with mine to rove,  
Here is no heart that beats to mine;  
O, give me back the joys I love,  
The friends and haunts of Olden time.

May 25th, 1827.

—Perrigrine

### Friendship Not Abundant

Friendship; how rudely is thy name profan'd  
How seldom felt, and yet how warmly claim'd  
Studied in wiles, man personates thy charms,  
And hides vile self in thy attractive form.  
Tis not while Fortune spreads her ample store,  
And want seems ever banished from our door;  
Tis not while honors round our brows entwine,  
Or winning Beauty in each feature shines;  
Tis not while crowds partake or courtiers bend  
That we can know the flatterer or the friend.  
Should some fell canker snatch from Beauty's form  
Each grace divine, and each commanding charm,  
But should our Fortune wrack'd in ruin lie,  
And honors laurels from our temples die,  
Then the true friend will all its solace lend  
The hand uphold, and we can boast a friend.  
While myriads that have revelled on our store,  
Honored, and knelt, are strangers at our door.  
Range with this Album, Friendship writes its name  
On every page in soft poetic strains;  
But should misfortune, breathe across your path  
Who will strew flowers or smoothe the bed of death?  
Some there may be on whom you may recline,  
But to each true one blot out Ninety-Nine.

Greenville, Sept. 22 1827.

—Western Bard



## Lines

The rose sat smiling on her cheek,  
 And hope her fairest visions drest,  
 And deep affection warm and meek,  
 Were pointing to the parent's breast:  
     The tedious hours of absence flown  
     On time's eventful restless wing;  
     She came to glad a father's home,  
     Amid the laughing bloom of spring,  
 Her early home, of childhood wild,  
 Where youthful fancy spread her dreams,  
 Where guardian love forever smiled,  
 And nature drew her fondest scenes.  
     Father thy locks are silvery grey,  
     And thou art bow'd with load of years;  
     Nor shall a daughter'd love repay,  
     Thy cares and all thy anxious tears.  
 And I shall strew affection's flowers,  
 Along life's swiftly ending path,  
 And I will cheer thy closing hours,  
 And smooth at last the bed of death.  
     She came, but ah, no father's tongue  
     Could speak in joy, to greet, to bless;  
     For we had bourn him to his home  
     And placed the sod upon his breast.  
 And still is moist the covering mould  
 Tho' basking in a sunny day,  
 And scarce the bells last solemn toll  
 Had died upon the breeze away.  
     Veteran, farewell, so one by one  
     Perish our country's champions brave,  
     Thy virtues we will dwell upon  
     And house thy failings in the grave.  
 And thou fair orphaned pensive maid,  
 My heart with thee shall wander slow,  
 To where thy father's dust is laid,  
 And echo to each burst of woe.  
     Though other hands than thine have spread  
     The couch of life's expiring hour,  
 He rests as calmly in his bed  
 As thine hadst odored it with flowers.  
     Daughter, unparented in grief,  
     As thou dost linger round his sod,  
     Learn that our days our joys are brief,  
     And seek a parent in thy God.

—Western Bard

## Farewell To Greenville

Farewell, when my Harp shall to mem'ry awake  
 Along the green banks of Ohio's clear rills;  
 One note of fond tribute shall pensively break,  
 And tenderly echo the name of Greenville

## Lines

A sweeter harp ne'er breathed nor sung  
 Among Columbia's hills,  
 Than now lies lonely and unstrung  
 Besides her crystal rills.  
 But as o'er watery wastes at eve,  
 Soft music breathes along,  
 So plaintive on the whispering breeze  
 Lingers the Poet's song.  
 A warmer heart, a truer breast  
 Ne'er glow'd with fancy's fire;  
 A gentler soul ne'er soar'd to rest  
 Or snatched an angel's lyre.  
 Farewell, departed shade adieu,  
 Life's stormy sea is past,  
 Though here her deadliest blast you knew,  
 Thy spirit rests at last.  
 Envy, Inconstancy, no more  
 Shall bid thy bosom bleed,  
 Nor fluctuating fortune pour  
 Her tempests on thy head.  
 But natures' children nymphs, and swains,  
 So oft as spring returns,  
 Shall cull the loveliest of the plain  
 Who once had come to learn.

—Western Bard



## APPENDIX 3

### The Orphan Boy

'Tis the last gleam of day, on the oak of  
the mountain,  
While evening comes clothed, in her mantle  
so dun,  
'Tis the nightengale sings o'er the soft  
gliding fountain,  
The village in silence is hushed from its  
hum.

Hour of sweet evening, so dear to my  
bosom,  
When this fond breast not a trouble had  
known;  
How fade your beauties, how die every  
blossom,  
The sun of gay raptures forever is gone.

O, this lone heart! once the seat of each  
pleasure,  
That shone in youth's morning, when  
transport was young;  
Where are the hopes that you planned  
without measure,  
When fancy, the siren, enchantingly sung?

On disappointment's swift wing they have  
fled me,  
Near as they seemed to my longing  
embrace;  
To pensive reflection and sadness have led  
me,  
And sorrow, deep sorrow, is found in their  
place.

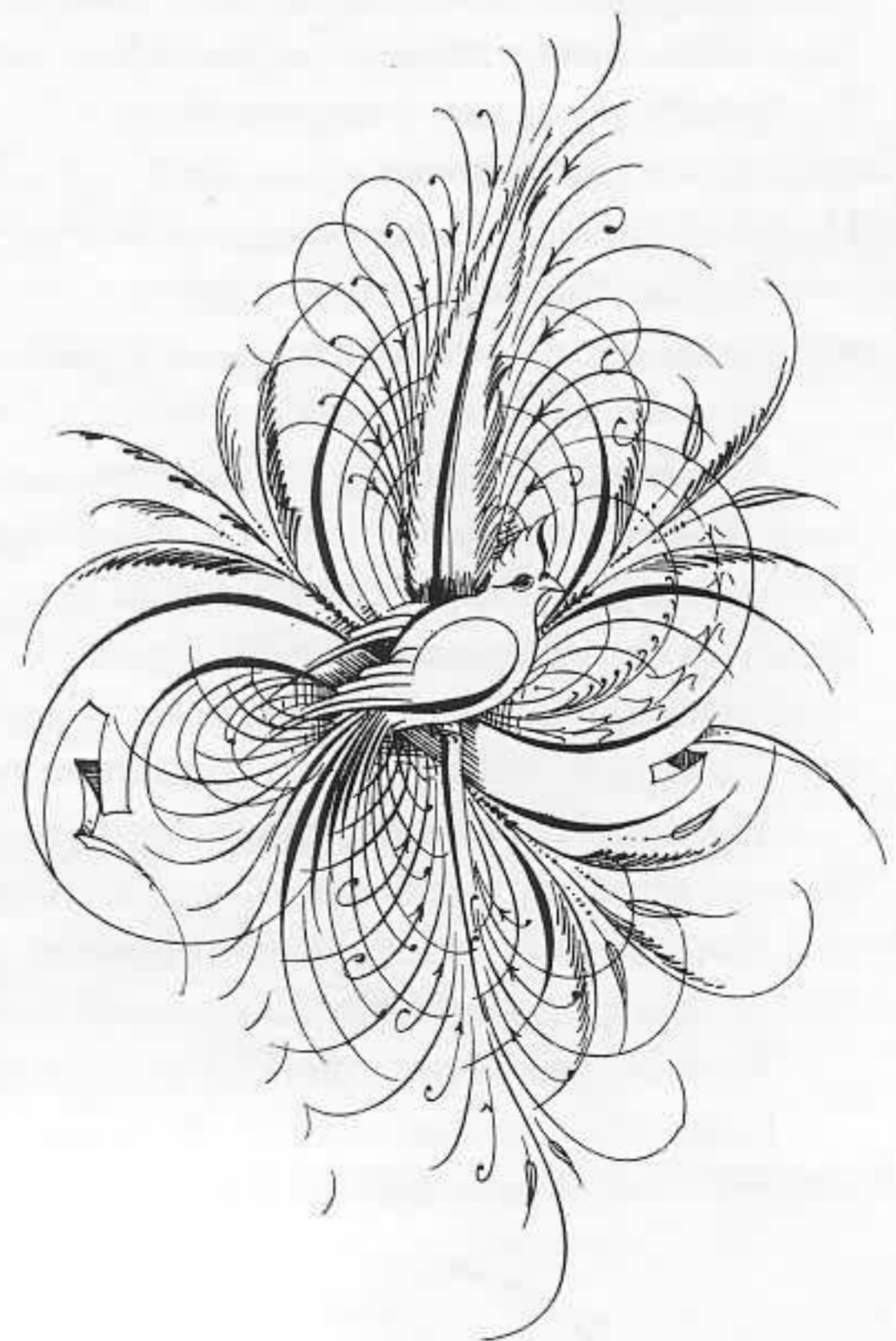
Friends of my youth have ye fled me  
forever?  
Guardians of childhood, where now do ye rest?  
Cold are your dwellings, and never, O  
never  
The voice of sweet rapture shall thrill thro'  
my breast.

Lone through the world's tangled mazes I  
wander;  
Pensive, unfriendly, its cold frowns bear;  
Wreck'd on life's ocean, my bark burst  
asunder,  
And the once breeze of hope is the gale of  
despair.

Such is the world, yet a safe port decrying,  
Far o'er the mountains wild tremulous  
wave;  
Hope, brilliant star, on the horizon lying,  
Throws its clear light o'er the gloom of the  
grave.

Ere long the Orphan Boy, friendless,  
forsaken,  
Shall rest where the friends of his childhood  
do sleep;  
And hope, bright celestial, still soaring  
unshaken,  
Waft home the forlorn from life's  
troublesome deep.

(1823)





## (Untitled)

Sweet harp! the only solace left  
 On life's uneven shore,  
 That hast the power to lull to rest,  
 And soothe the darkened hour:  
 Retired from noise and tumult free,  
 In solitude I cling to thee.

Maidens attend! and would you know  
 Why from the busy world I go,  
 And ere a score of years have sped  
 In quick succession o'er my head,  
 Ah, the young heart life's busy scenes  
 Forsakes, and fancy's sunny dreams;  
 If the lov'd muse will but inspire,  
 The tale shall echo from my lyre.

Where wide Atlantic's wave is heard  
 To murmur on his shore,  
 A father's humble home appeared  
 In happy days of yore.  
 There op'd my eyes upon the day,  
 There sped my early years away;  
 There health and plenty flourish'd free,  
 And all was friendship, love and glee.  
 Ere sixteen annual suns had pass'd  
 Ere sixteen times the wintry blast  
 Had rode in madness o'er the plain,  
 And rudely thrown his icy chain  
 O'er limpid pool and stream:  
 Ere sixteen times the solar ray  
 Had warm'd the lap of smiling May—  
 Ere sixteen times the floral bloom  
 Had blush'd on winter's dreary tomb,  
 And summer gleam'd, perfecting pour'd  
 In autum's hand, the plenteous board.  
 Ere sixteen times the woods, aside  
 Had thrown their laughing verdur'd pride  
 For sober mantle grey,  
 My azure sky was overspread  
 With clouds like curtains of the dead  
 Fierce, on destruction's restless gale,  
 Disease, all meager, dearthless, pale  
 With eagerness attach'd the sire,  
 Health from a mother's cheek retir'd;  
 Two much lov'd brothers, sisters three  
 Sunk down beneath the stern decree  
 Death follow'd, and now lowly rest,

The kindred of this aching breast.  
 I watch'd around their anguished head,  
 I wept around their dying bed;  
 I saw them 'neath the willow lie,  
 And wish'd, but vainly wish'd to die!  
 Then did the world a solace lend?  
 Or sorrow find a soothing friend?  
 Ah no! the world its gall combin'd.  
 And wove the freezing frown for me;  
 And, with the wreath of sorrow twin'd  
 The aloes bitter leaf for me.  
 Ah! then the fiendish av'rice came,  
 Rude and infuriate driv'n;  
 And all, but want, wan, sickly name,  
 Were to another giv'n.  
 Yea, want before me rose, behind  
 Were all my hopes to death consign'd.  
 Next came the wily voice of love,  
 And pour'd the Siren tale,  
 Mingled in all the forms that prove  
 The fairest to prevail.  
 I, friendless, homeless and forlorn,  
 Too unsuspecting, to the charm  
 Of friendship, lent an ear;  
 Its false professions, (seeming kind,)  
 Shed through the sorrow tinctured mind,  
 A solace insincere.  
 False, wily man! the treach'rous smile  
 Had the power the orphan to beguile;  
 The promis'd faith, illicit fraught,  
 Once more the bane of anguish brought,

## (Untitled)

Thy pilgrimage is o'er,  
 Glory is won!  
 And weary years and pain and sin,  
 No more disturb thy home;  
 Rest! but we may not speak thy name,  
 As with the living known,  
 Mother! the answer comes again,  
 Only in echo lone.

— Western Bard



## APPENDIX 3

### Last Words of the Unfortunate Lewis Shot by Order of General Andrew Jackson

I fear not death for I have stood,  
Where death attended ev'ry blow,  
And fields were crimsoned o'er with blood,  
But must I, must I perish so?

I love my country, to redress  
Here wrongs, I left my home afar;  
For her I bear'd the soldier's breast,  
Amid the struggling ranks of war.

Land of my birth, fair freedom's home,  
O had I, had I died for thee  
And does that country come to doom,  
A shameful death, a bended knee?

No, 'tis ambition's brows to grace  
With crimson laurels that I die;  
Brave cruel chief, my blood shall raise  
Its voice for vengeance to the sky

Land of my birth, my home, my friends,  
Comrades, that wait my volied knell;  
My last warm pray'r for you ascends,  
The cap is drawn, fire, now, farewell.

—Western Bard

### (Untitled)

'Tis spring, and my cabin around  
The wild flowret raises its head;  
'Tis evening, and shadows profound  
Encircling my dwelling, are shed;  
I muse in the midst of the grove,  
And backward I earnestly throw  
My thoughts, ever turning to rove,  
O'er the scenes that occasion my woe.  
Hours past! When ye raise to my mind,  
How sad is the picture ye bring;  
Your pleasures are fled with the wind,  
What sorrow retaineth its sting.

### Poet's Prayer

Thou Great Eternal Source of Light and Life  
When nod controls the bellows of the main  
O bid my bosom cease its sinful strife  
Aspire to Heav'n and ne'er offend again!

O Thou whose wisdom plann'd, whose pow'r supreme  
Called into being countles worlds above  
Breathe on my soul, be thou its ev'ry theme  
And warm my heart with more than mortal love!

O Thou, who wrought this fragile frame, control  
Each passion, in obedience to thy nod,  
Strike ev'ry other image from my soul  
And write upon it thy blest image, God!

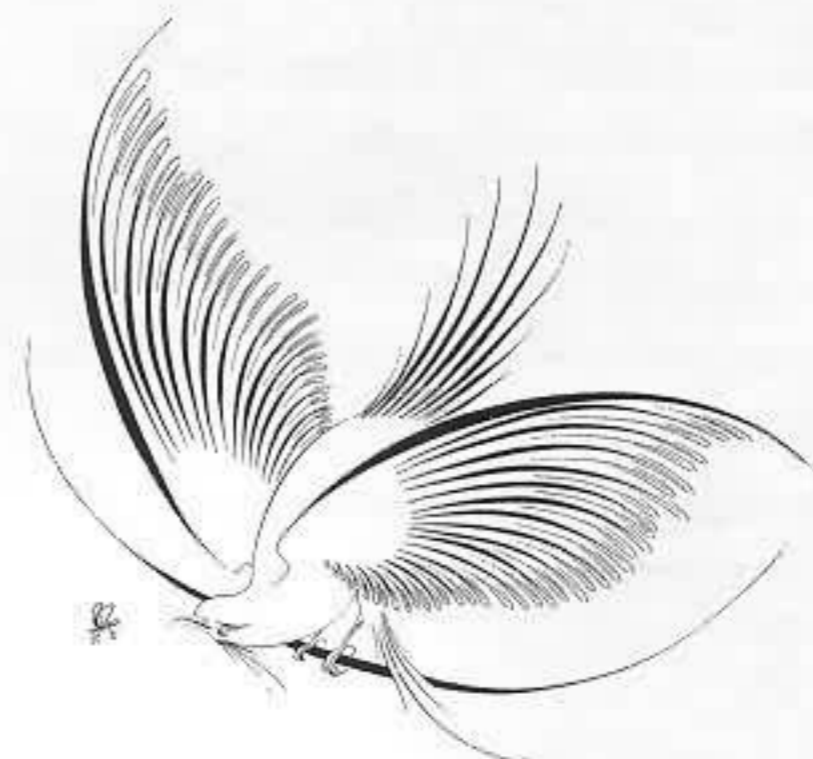
Thou God of Grace, O teach me charity,  
Teach me to raise the drooping head of woe  
Teach me the Widow's, Orphan's friend to be  
And kindly seek occasion to bestow!

Author of Wisdom, lend me wisdom's aid;  
Poor changing worm, I perish but for *thee*;  
O let thy spirit guard and guide and shade  
And lead the wanderer through life's devious way.

As Thou forgivest, teach me to forgive  
O bless my foes, and make them friends of thine;  
Teach me a life of purity to live  
And graven ev'ry virtue in my mind.

And, when, at last my voice in earth is hush'd  
My name forgot, my humble harp unstrung  
O call my spirit from this crumbling dust  
To praise Thee in a neverending song!

Greenville, New York; 20 August 1827





## Sweep On

At midnight's still and solemn hour,  
I stood upon a ruin'd tow'r—  
    where lingering moonbeams play'd.  
The ivy climed around its halls,  
Its crumbling domes and ruin'd walls  
    That cast an awful shade.

Nature in quiet slumbers lay  
O'er mountain wild and glossy bay.  
    Deep silence held her rein,  
Like some portentous sombre dream  
Through and grove, and glen and winding stream,  
    And far extended plain.

The soul, like clear expanse of main  
reflects the images again,  
    that verge upon its shore;  
And memory turn'd to years gone by,  
When these lone ruins wooed the sky,  
    And heard the martial roar.

Here peal'd the Clarion trump of war.  
Kings called their vassals from afar,  
    Here harness'd legions stood;  
Here rung the shield, and flashed the sword,  
Here the loud shout of triumph pour'd,  
    And fields were dyed in blood.

But now no sound the silence breaks,  
That slumbers round from tow'r to lake,  
    The Warrior's strife is O'er;  
The princely standard broad unfurl'd;  
The roar of the javelin hurl'd,  
    Are heard and seen no more.

And mem'ry up the stream of time,  
Sail'd in her bark, and view'd sublime  
    The ruins there display'd;  
The Roman pow'r, the Grecian host,  
Temple and tow'r in ruin lost  
    In times oblivious shade.

And so, cried I, old time sweep on.  
And bear the present age along  
    To dust and ruin too;  
Sweep on, in deep unearthly tone,  
Sweep on, re-echoed from the dome,  
    Sweep on, the echo grew:  
Sweep on, the crumbling walls replied  
Sweep on, rebounds from either side.  
    Sweep on, I cried again  
Sweep on, re-echoed from the wood;  
Sweep on, rebell'd o'er the flood,  
    And answered from the plain.

The voice prophetic, long and deep,  
Is true time's unrelenting sweep  
    Impartially bears on;  
As waves on waves incessant roll,  
So age on age bursts on their goal,  
    And thus the echoes rung.

Sweep on, Old Time, and Wisdom sweep  
Folly from man, that sinks him deep  
    In degradation's pool.  
Sweep on, base Idols, rubbish, too,  
To vaults unwet with noble dew,  
    And liberate the soul.

Feb. 1827.

—Western Bard

## (Untitled)

Poesy with copious hand,  
Here besprinkle choicest flow'rs,  
Genius range through classic land;  
and gather sweets from fairy bow'rs;  
Modest wit and pensive sorrow,  
Gems from hope and sadness borrow,  
Friends where'er these pages rove,  
Range the Muse's sacred grove;  
In the solitary haunts,  
Round the altar of the saint,  
Myrtle, Rose and Lily light,  
Cull to form a garland bright.

—Perrigrine



## APPENDIX 3

### Madam

A humble Poet would essay,  
To calm thy fears and wipe thy tears away,  
For sure enough of evil marks our track  
When steady prudence governs ev'ry act;  
Prudence (wide Matron) while I deem her thine  
I own the fault of indiscretion mine,  
And yet that indiscretion has prevailed,  
To develop what years might not detail,  
A soul to generous feelings warm and true  
Prompt to condemn each fault that meets its view  
Not loud complaining tenderly severe,  
Its strongest language and complaint a tear;  
Such do I spire and such enjoy a name  
When crumble fabrics of ill gotten fame.

If the intention only form the crime,  
Some clear excuse may advocate my rhyme,  
But if to break the bound of sober thought  
And range with folly be a serious fault,  
At Reason's court the Bard a culprit stands,  
And waits his execution at thy hands;  
Yet hopes thou wilt incline thine ear and give  
A kind reprieve and bid the offender live  
Thou art a stranger, many a league divides  
From thy enjoyment thine own fireside,  
Home of thy youth where parent fondness smil'd  
And warm affection blest thee from a child:  
Doom'd now no more the walks of youth no  
more to tread

But rest a stranger on a stranger's bed;  
And think of days gone by, when interwind  
True kindred spirits mingling, beat with thine.  
A stranger, O how sacred is the name,  
Even the Arab owns its humble claim;  
His tent he proffers for a timely rest,  
And halves his morsel with his hungry guest.  
And, shall the Arab be the stranger's friend  
And still the Poet only wrong extend?

It is not so, for tenderer fiber twine,  
In the nice fabric of a Poet's mind.  
Yes, sympathy must there forever reign,  
Or the lov'd Muse would ne'er inspire a strain,  
He bears no sigh he sees no tear drop fall  
Marks not a pain but he feels them all.

And yet in playful and eccentric flight  
Poets are doomed to deviate from the right,  
Then none more prompt in Lamentatious song  
To blame frail self and expiate the wrong;  
Say Madam, shall the Poet be forgiven,  
Thou sure hast learned a precedent of Heaven  
Forgive, for when I saw thy tears descend  
The Bard was doubly thy devoted friend;

Let harsh remembrance in Oblivion sleep  
And thou no more shall by my folly weep.  
I am a stranger too, afar I roam,  
From the dear scenery of my woodland home,  
Where anxious eyes long watch for my return,  
And a fond mother still retires to mourn.  
I am a stranger and I've seen exlire [sic]  
Life's fondest hopes, its brightest dreams retire

Have felt the grasp of cold misfortune's hand  
And the deep cruel perfidy of man.  
And should not let this generous maxim cease,  
Invade not, but promote anothers peace,  
For counting all the happiness we grasp  
Small is the sun we find in life at last;  
And that small sun is in anothers pow'r  
It may not last to gild one little hour,  
Long life and health and hope to thee be giv'n  
Till hope expire amid the joy of Heav'n

Greenville Aug. 22 1827. — Western Bard

### (Untitled)

The world all sunk to impotence,  
We wish to die.

When all the cords to earth that bind,  
Are broke and lonely is the mind,  
Our hopes and friends to death consign'd,  
We wish to die.

When hope, celestial, warms the breast,  
And points a future source of rest,  
Within the mansions of the blest,  
'Tis Heaven to die!

—P.R. Spencer



### The Fireside

Ah, lonely is that spot of earth  
Where first the minstrel sprang to birth;  
In mouldering ruins scatter'd low,  
Its walls within the nettles grow;  
The brier and wildvine cluster there  
Around that hearth where first I shar'd  
A father's smile in boyish pride,  
Which gladdened all that fireside.

'Twas there a mother's smile I caught,  
'Twas there my infant lips were taught  
To truth subservient and to prayer,  
To praise the God of earth and air,  
And there on Fancy's silken wing,  
Danc'd by life's laughing hour of spring,  
Nor deemed I foy would e're subside  
Around that happy fireside.

Beneath the willows bending shade,  
That sire in death is weeping laid,  
And they who on the selfsame breast,  
Were lulled to calm and tranquil rest  
Scattered like isles of souhern main  
Are blended with the dust again,  
And lo, the voice of joy subsides,  
Forever from the fireside.

The stranger's footsteps rudely tread,  
Where first reposed my infant head,  
And unknown forms at eve are seen  
In careless walk along that green  
Where first I learn'd from nature's smile  
To play my childish gambols wild,  
Nor deem'd I ruin could preside  
Around my much loved fireside.

The world is but a passing dream,  
It bubbles on a bounding stream,  
Man's little bark must soon be drawn  
Down to the gen'ral gulf along;  
But grant kind heav'n when life shall cease  
To moor us in the port of peace  
Where joy and love divine preside  
Around that celestial fireside.

—Western Bard

### To My Album

Go spotless page, go court the busy pen,  
A season range then come thee back again.  
Go fly, but pause where Science deigns to dwell  
And spend an hour in Eloisa's cell;  
Go where fair truth her banner broad unfurls  
And frowns in tears on an inconstant world.  
Go where sage wisdom scans with pen sublime;  
And Genius flashes through each note of time  
Go to the votive Hermit's lone abode,  
And learn from Nature, traits of Nature's God.  
Go where pale lonely Melancholy sweeps  
Responsive to the sounding deep.  
Go where due Pleasure (bliss that Heaven approves)  
Drinks the pure nectar of Elenean groves;  
Go where Parnassian flow'rs spontaneous spring,  
And Nature's children, Nature's praises sing;  
Pause too, where Poesy her note prolongs  
In plaintive murmurs round the Helicon;  
Go where firm friendship and confiding Love,  
Celestial twins, in ties harmonious move;  
Go where Religion (Heaven's awarded maid)  
Adorns the palace or the lowly shade,  
List the still breathings of her spotless mind  
Her faith unshaken and her hopes refined:  
Go, lend thy bosom, cull from each a flow'r  
That I may trace in life's declining hour;  
(Sacred to virtue, Friendship, Love and Truth)  
Some fond Memorial of the friends of youth.

Aug. 29th 1827.

—Western Bard

### Hope

Hope is a treasure of the soul,  
More dear than all beside,  
A voice that ev'ry storm controls  
On life's eventful tide.

It burns where viture warms the breast,  
As light to realms afar  
Sweet foretaste of unfading rest  
Tis Hope our friendly star.

Greenville 14 August 1827. —Western Bard



### Christmas Hymn

The Sun had oft in glory ris'n  
 And light and life to nature giv'n,  
 But, round the soul still darkness clung,  
 And error o'er its vision hung;  
 But now behold a brighter morn!  
 The Sun of righteousness is born!  
 While the dark gloom of error's night,  
 Dissolves in an unclouded light.

A thousand shouts of gladness rung,  
 When Earth was in its balance hung;  
 And Suns and Systems, finished bow'd,  
 Harmonious to their Maker, God.  
 But now a nobler chorus rings—  
 And louder to the King of Kings,  
 Bright millions join the glad Amen,  
 O'er the fair plains of Bethlehem.

Immanuel reigns! the Saviour comes,  
 He makes his footstool now his home;  
 Not in the pageant pomp of state,  
 That hails the advent of the great;  
 No gorgeous couch sustains his head;  
 The manger forms his humble bed,  
 He whom all nations shall adore,  
 And at his feet their treasures pour.

The Saviour reigns! he visits Earth—  
 Angels rejoicing, hail his birth;  
 He comes to bid contentions cease—  
 The Lord of Lords, and Prince of Peace;  
 He comes to dry the mourner's eye,  
 He comes to raise our thro'ts on high;  
 He comes the wounds of sin to heal,  
 And words of Life and Light reveal.

The Saviour comes! upon the tree,  
 Behold he bleeds, my soul for thee,  
 He bows, he groans—the Saviour dies,  
 And mantled in the tomb he lies!  
 Death's bonds he bursts—he breaks their night,  
 And brings immortal life to light,  
 Ascends his native heaven again,  
 Sing Heaven and Earth! Immanuel reigns!

Join in his praise, thou orb of light,  
 Ye stars that twinkle thro' the night;  
 Ye flying clouds—ye winds and gales,  
 Bear round the earth the joyous tale,  
 Thou rolling sea awake his praise;  
 Earth! echo to the general lay,  
 In one united chorus join!  
 An Anthem boundless and divine!

Ye nations! make a louder song!  
 Let love the joyous note prolong;  
 Awake his praise on nobler strings  
 And hail him, Prophet, Priest and King!  
 Hail him who stooped from Heav'n above,  
 To bring you Faith and Hope and Love,  
 To break your chains, to bring you nigh  
 And pave your passage to the sky.

Cleveland, December 24, 1827. - Western Bard

### On The Death of a Child Four Years Old.

Little voyager, thy day  
 Was like the glimmering bloom of May;  
 Fair, but transient, hopeful, sweet,  
 Beauteous, pleasant, but how fleet!

Thou wert lent to bless, awhile,  
 With thy prattle and thy smile,  
 Artless as the tender flower,  
 That bedecks the sumer bower.

Go; (sweet source of fading joy)  
 To thy Saviors lovely boy;  
 As the plants renew in spring,  
 Thou shalt wake to life again.

Doubly blest! for on thy years,  
 Life hath never shed its cares:  
 Blest; for thou didst only see  
 The world, without its perfidy!

—Spencer



### Wreck And Rescue

He stood beside the sparkling wine,  
He bowed him at the cheating shrine,  
He drained the social bowl;  
His blood was warmed with liquid fire,  
That heightens while it mocks desire,  
And poisons all the soul.

Again he drank, again he felt  
His thirst return, til manhood melts  
And reason leaves her throne;  
While in the temper's coils he lay,  
No fear of danger crossed his way,  
Lull'd by her siren tone!

Again he drank; again, again,  
What maniac fury fires his veins  
And marks his mad career!  
And Angel's voice exhorts, implores,  
For woman's love with life endures,  
And pleads through all her tears.

Thus wasted all his goods and store,  
Went sits with sorrow at the door,  
Where tattered garments wave;  
And yet, O God! he drinks again—  
No human drop can fill his veins,  
He is the drunkard's grave.

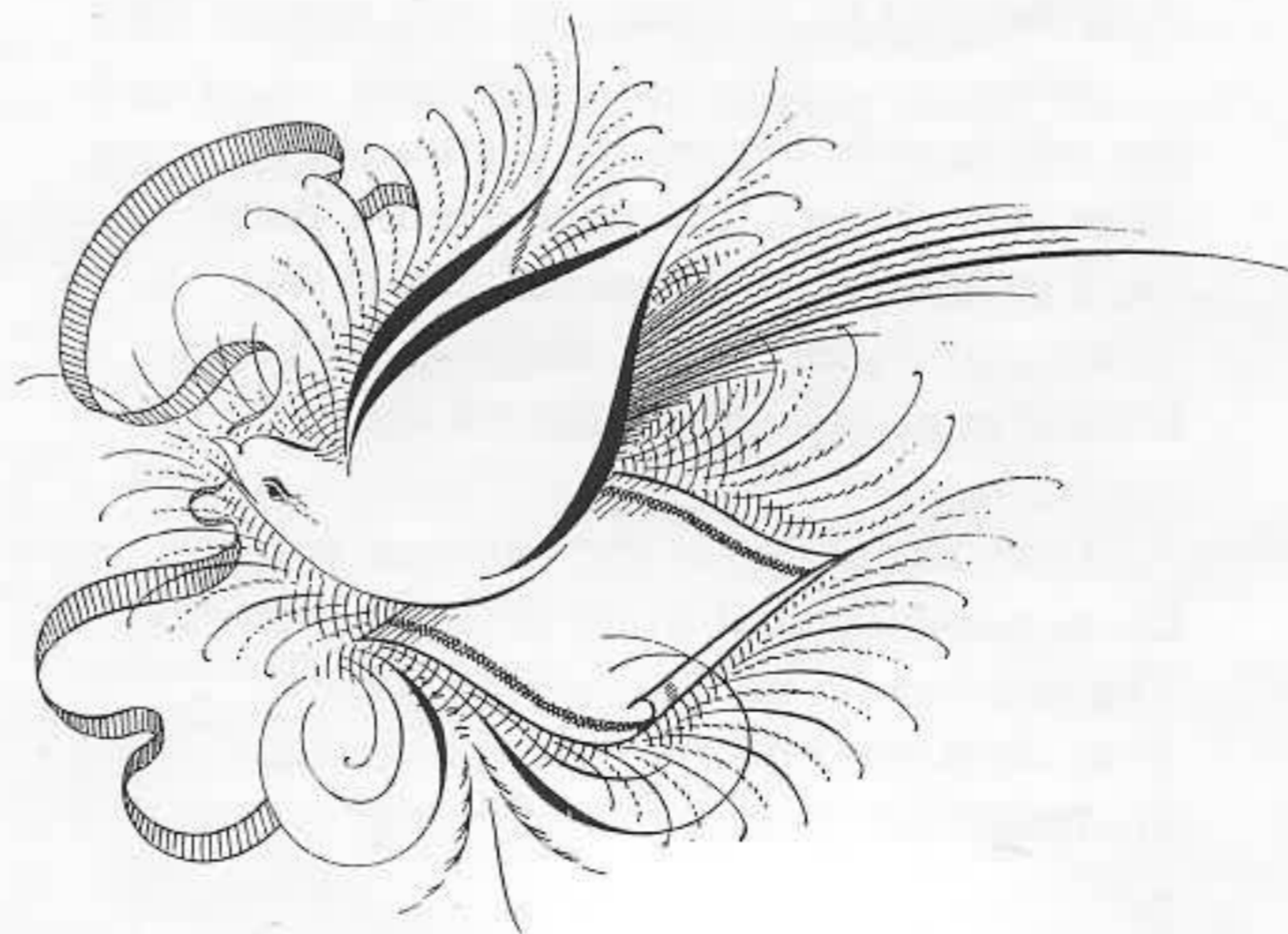
O no! he lives, he lives again,  
No more he drinks, no more he drains,  
Glory to God on high!  
Reason returns, and millions join  
In the redeeming song divine,  
Ascending to the sky.

Oh, God of mercy, hear our prayer  
Still make the prodigal Thy care,  
And guard us from the bowl;  
Those drops compose a dangerous wave  
Where, once embarked, the unwary slave  
Perils his priceless soul.

### Inconsistency of Man, I

How strange and inconsistent being man,  
With contradictions wove in all his plans;  
Boasting of Reason, yet rejects its aid,  
Allied to Angels, grovels in the shade  
With heav'n born powers where wisdom may distil  
The dew of health, he clings to folly still  
He praises virtue with his every breath,  
Yet worships vice from childhood unto death  
Oft he offends and feels repentant pains,  
Then turns, commits the same offence again  
So on through life he holds his devious way,  
Forever moralizing, yet astray,  
Forever on the point of being good,  
Yet sails impetuous on a poisonous flood  
In this frail bark, propelled by passion's breath,  
Whose red moon sweeps to the gulf of death  
A thousand vows he makes with mortal hand,  
He writes them lightly in the changing sand  
Oft he resolves, but resolution dies,  
Recoils at sin, but to its bosom flies  
Acknowledges a God supreme above  
Who form'd, gave life and blessed him with his love  
To whom all homage is forever just;  
Yet, shapes a thousand Idols from the dust  
Bow'd at the shrine, full low their votary lies,  
Thus man begins, proceeds, declines and dies  
Then tell me Mary, tell me if you can,  
If trust on earth, or virtue dwell in man?  
Forgive my freedom, I'll begin anew,  
So others may extend the same to you.

—Cleonoral





## APPENDIX 3

### Inconsistency of Man, II

How strange and inconsistent being, man,  
With contradictions wove in all his plans,  
Boasting of reason yet rejects its aid,  
Allied to angels, grovels in the shade.  
With heaven born powers, where wisdom  
    may distil  
The dew of health; he clings to folly still;  
Virtue, deep rooted, praises with his breath,  
Yet worships vice from childhood on to death:  
Believes a God supreme there is above,  
Who form's, gave life, and blest us with  
    his love;  
Who claims devotion, from his creatures  
    here,  
And adoration with a heart sincere.  
This he believes, yet low to Mammon falls,  
Pays his devoirs, and his assistance calls;  
Alone to other Gods, their rites they join,  
Yet own one being is alone divine.  
At passions call, their deep philosophy,  
Religion all is laid at once aside,  
And one more period forward throw the day,  
The birth of wisdom and the end of pride.  
Or he resolves to-morrow's sun shall see  
A heart that breathes the spirit of the free  
A month, and I will cease my wayward course,  
And seek for rectitude in virtue's source.  
How soon, alas! by such resolves,  
The spring of life is o'er;  
How soon each annual sun revolves,  
And youth returns no more!  
Say when the cup of misery o'erflown  
And the tired heart beats cold with human  
    woes,  
Say will ye seek, O man, no higher power,  
Than that of earth, to soothe a future hour?  
Or, if ye will, when will ye cease from sin,  
When mend your morals, and your life begin?  
Is there in pleasure ought can fill the  
    heart,  
And cloy the wishes of the immortal part?  
Do ye not know that when ye seek her bow'r  
The recollection brings a bitter hour?  
If so, then why on fancy's spreading wing,  
In danger list, to hear the siren sing?

Say will ye waste for phantom joys of earth,  
The heavenly pleasures of celestial birth,  
And yielding to fall'n natures low degree  
Resign the hopes of immortality?  
As for a fiction'd life of pleasure here,  
Resign up heaven? Decision, sad, severe!  
Thrice thoughtless man, yet erring in thy  
    thought  
Where ends thy pride? Low are thy feelings  
    brought.  
Thy consequence self love, conceit; are  
    rust!  
Soon crumbling, falls, all levelled with  
    thy dust.  
O how can pride in worms conspicuous glow?

### An Acrostic

As the fair vi'let humbly woos the shade,  
Nor sighs to leave its own its native glade,  
Nor intrinsic worth oft blooms unknown  
Each tint unheeded and each sweet unflown.  
Let the agy poppy flaunt in airy pride,  
Its leaves soon wither and its charmes subside;  
Zepherus bears them on his wings away,  
And rifles all its glories of a day.  
See the fair vi'let still its sweets sustains,  
Courts not our gaze and what it was remains;  
On her the winds in gentle whispers blow,  
For modest beauty never worships show.  
In yonder valley springs the myrtle green  
Emblem of changeless truth in every scene,  
Like the sweet vi'let and the myrtle green  
Devoid of pride an falsehood may'st thou ever be.

Greenville, 26th July 1827.

— Western Bard



**(Untitled and Unfinished)**

Sweet stream, I tread thy pleasant banks,  
 not as in days of yore;  
 When hope and youth and beauty bright,  
 bloom'd on thy verdant shore  
 When every morning song was joy,  
 and evening's joyous still,  
 And the glad heart each echo join'd  
 of valley woad and rill.

Sweet river on thy pleasant banks,  
 young spring delights to tread,  
 And there the earliest roses blow,  
 and vi'let lifts its head;  
 The hawthorn white and lily light,  
 bend down to kiss the stream,  
 That bears their balm in haste away,  
 like love's expiring dream.

Sweet stream, I tread thy pleasant banks,  
 but all that charm is fed  
 The brightest flow'st bloom there no more,  
 and hope's green leaves are dead,  
 Nor morn nor evening's song of joy,  
 I echo as they blend  
 An angel taught that echo once,  
 she's gone that echo ends.

O what a sunlit dream  
 when Laura met mine eye,  
 What dearer boon could earth . . .

**(Untitled)**

My friend this maxim ever keep in view,  
 That he who flatters most, most slanders too.

May the world, dear Elisabeth never impart,  
 Its cares and its sorrows to thee,  
 May the keen arrow of pain n'er be fixed in  
 thy heart  
 Where I hope there is friendship for me.

**An Acrostic**

Man solitary, roam'd through Eden's groves,  
 And pluck'd each flow'r except the flow'r of Love.  
 Round him a thousand warbling tongues rejoic'd,  
 Yet one was wanting, 'twas an Angel's voice.  
 Soon Heav'n the tears of discontent beheld,  
 Call'd life from sleep, and all his wants dispelled,  
 Of Eden finished then the Bard begun  
 Fired at the vie and ravished by her tongue.  
 In the fair Daughters of that nymph we share  
 Each bliss, each solace that can soften care.  
 Love is our crown, our proudest fondest boon,  
 Dull are life's joys till woman bids them bloom.

Greenville, July 11th; 1827.

—Perrigrine.

**The Rainbow**

The torrent descended along the dark billow,  
 The gale burst in angry commotion,  
 The sea-nymphs awoke from the coral cave pillow  
 By the thunders that broke on the ocean,  
 But the spirit of Pean, was awaiting and nigh,  
 He spake and the storm sunk to slumber,  
 The sun from the west, unveiled his bright eye,  
 And hushed was the voice of the thunder  
 And the bright arching bow, o'er the smooth waters hung  
 Fresh promise and hope was inspiring  
 The seamen aloft, sung the song of his home  
 While Sol to his rest was retiring  
 O, grant me kind Heaven, I cried, when shall cease  
 Life's tempests, its storms and commotion  
 The bright bow of promise, of glory and peace  
 May appear on Eternity's Ocean.

—Perrigrine



## APPENDIX 3

### (Untitled)

'Tis this that wakes the deep and frequent sigh,  
'Tis this that calls the sorrow-speaking tear  
From the wrung bosom to the weeping eye.

Yet list, though worlds to ruin shall descend,  
And countless orbs amid the wreck retire,  
High in the heavens the soul shall find a friend,  
Thy flame fair Virtue never shall expire.  
While yet her soul was anxious lingering here,  
Ready to leap from this abode of storms,  
She spake; O that my young companions dear,  
Would fly for mercy to a Saviour's arms.  
Where is Matilda, late the pleasing friend,  
Obedient daughter, and the sister true?  
Beneath yon bier, she low in Earth descends  
And soon the grave shall open its vaults for you.

Would ye were wise, forget not soon the pray'r  
She breathed emphatic ere she took her flight;  
Haste, on a Saviour's bosom lean from care,  
And make his glory thy supreme delight.  
Sad round this hearth where once Matilda shone,  
The lone left kindred silently appear,  
Gaze on the void that gloomy spreads around,  
A broken circle and their grief sincere.

No more the aged parent's eye shall dwell,  
Upon the rising worth that mark'd their child,  
No more their breasts with kindling rapture swell,  
And hail with gladness here endearing smile.  
Yet mid the tinges, sorrows breath has drawn.  
The pen of hope shall mix one pleasing dye,  
That open her vision in celestial dawn  
And rests her spirit in her native sky.

Heaven will with its propitious pow'r be nigh,  
Religion will its soothing aid impart,  
To wipe the tear from the parent's eye  
And shed their balms upon the bleeding heart;  
While friendship's hand, bestrews the grave with  
    flower's,  
Where lov'd Matilda lies in silent rest,  
    O may we dedicate to God our hours,  
And write her virtues on our every breast.

Man, feeble man; co-equal with the dust,  
Here lingers mid the gen'ral wreck of Joy,  
Yet heavenly hopes inspire a better trust  
That grief nor sorrow shall ere long destroy.  
Auspicious Morn, when nature shall dissolve  
When the low tomb shall yield its kindred dead,  
When Nations shall attend the last resolve  
And Heaven's high voice the Eternal fiat read;

Then souls on earth knit by the warmest love,  
Who glowed devoted with celestial fire,  
Shall meet among the hymning hosts above,  
And strike to praise a never-ending choir.  
While here are broke the closest earthly ties,  
Calm resignation can each plaint control,  
And hope, inspire each ardent wish to rise,  
And praise the immortal Author of the soul.

Though in the arms of Death Matilda sleeps,  
And Nature's cords feel deep the heavy blow,  
Yet heavenly promise can its solace speak,  
The sealing balm for each corroding woe.

Sunday Morn. 28th Mar., 1824.

### Ye Know Me Not!

Ye know me not! Misfortune's child  
Reclines within the woody wild:  
The elmin and the cypress tree  
Weave o'er her Cot a canopy;  
Through which, nor Sol can cast a beam,  
Nor Luna shed her silver sheen,  
Save when the dancing zephyrs glide,  
And throw the quivering boughs aside.  
Here solitude profoundly reigns,  
Unbroken in its reverie,  
Save by the songsters mellow strains,  
And harp of her that low complains  
Beneath the canopy—  
And as the strings her fingers press,  
She hugs the idol to her breast,  
And in unison with her woe,  
The simple music learns to flow.





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ONE DOLLAR POSTPAID



Box 129

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Dear Mr. Courtney:

It gives me pleasure to say that I am much gratified with the results which I obtained by practicing from your "Lessons in Ornamental Writing." Can safely say that my handwriting has improved two hundred per cent. I shall never regret the time spent on your masterly copies, and can cheerfully and conscientiously recommend your "Lessons" to those who are ambitious to become good rapid writers.

Yours truly,  
W. K. STOLTE



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COURTNEY'S SCHOOL OF PENMANSHIP  
BY CORRESPONDENCE

DETROIT, MICHIGAN



# INSTRUCTIONS

## FOR FRANCIS B. COURTNEY'S LESSONS IN DASHY WRITING

**D**ashy writing is worth the attention of anyone who can appreciate the beautiful. The graceful curves, the harmony of lines, the delicate touch, and the dashy shade combine to make forms both pleasing and fascinating, and those who have a few leisure moments each day can find rare pleasure in practicing from the copies. It has high commercial value, and the possessor of a dashy hand can always find a ready market for his skill.

Dashy writing occupies an important place in the history of the development of our commercial schools, and no small measure of the success of the pioneers in the commercial educational field is due to their ability to handle the pen skillfully. In the early days it was a conspicuous feature of the business school, and it is doubtful whether the business schools of this country would now be occupying their present position in the educational field had it not been for this agency in their early development. Many of the proprietors of our greatest commercial educational institutions received their first inspiration for the work they have accomplished from their skill in writing. Nor have these schools ever lost sight of the value of dashy writing in attracting the favorable attention of the public to their institutions.

It is my aim in presenting this series of copies and suggestions to make it practical and of the greatest possible value. The copies represent the rapid style I use in my every day work. They contain grace, harmony, and dash, the three elements of beautiful writing.

### PREPARATION.

Good materials are absolutely necessary. Without them you can accomplish nothing. What do you need? Not an elaborate equipment; just some good paper, several oblique penholders, a box of fine pointed flexible pens, some blotters and a good table of the right height. Any ordinary straight-back chair is good.

Now, having the equipment, position demands your attention.

The photographic illustrations tell the whole story much better than it could be told in words. Study them carefully. Observe in illustration No. 1 the position of the chair, the posture of the body, the manner in which the feet are placed on the floor, the position of the head, and the arms on the desk. In illustration No. 2 you will please note the relative positions of the arms. The elbows, as shown by the illustration, are equally distant from the body. Keep the shoulders square, the head level, and your work directly in front of you. Notice the position of the paper on the desk, and the manner of holding and adjusting the paper with the left hand. Stop right here until you thoroughly understand everything relating to position.

### HOW TO HOLD THE PEN.

The manner of holding the pen comes next. Let us study illustrations 3, 4, and 5 very carefully. No. 3 shows how the penholder is held between the second finger and the thumb. No. 4 shows the under part of the hand as it is when ready for action. No. 5 shows the relative position of the fingers and how they are brought under the palm of the hand. There is but little difference between the appearance of the hand when holding the pen correctly, and when at rest with the fingers partly closed. Of course it is understood that no two hands are made alike, so you are not expected to make your hand look like those in the illustrations. But it is the general principles of correct penholding that you should study and apply.

Illustration No. 6 shows both sides of the arm when in position for writing, and illustrates further the holding of the pen. Notice how the arm rests on the large muscle below the elbow, that the wrist and hand are absolutely free from the desk, and the third and fourth fingers serve as a vehicle on which the hand rides lightly over the paper in whatever way the mind directs. Study your hand carefully and then the illustration. When you have caught the idea you have already learned how to hold your pen, one of the first essentials of dashy writing.

### MOVEMENT.

There is but one movement to which I have chained my life's work in the field of dashy and rapid writing. It is the muscular movement, the movement that has done more for penmanship than any other ever tried or even suggested. It is the foundation of all penmanship skill. You must acquire it or any amount of time and effort you may devote to this work will be lost. You must develop and

store away a generous quantity. You must practice exercises until the action of the arm is light, absolutely free, and under perfect control. Such action can be acquired only through a complete relaxation of all the muscles of the hand, arm and shoulders. Gripping the penholder severely produces a rigid tension of the muscles, prevents freedom, lightness of touch, and grace of movement. Do not attempt any of the shaded strokes until you can make the light strokes with perfect ease on copy slip No. 4. The oval exercise is the best promoter of good results and the true secret to dashy writing.

### THE SHADES.

The shaded strokes will doubtless cause you a great deal of trouble and discouragement, but by careful study and persistent effort you can accomplish the desired end. Your first tendency will be to make them slowly, and resultingly heavy and lifeless. You must overcome this at once. The shades require the same free action as the light lines. They are made with a lively, yet deliberate movement, a bold, springy pressure on the pen and a quick release without stopping or checking the motion. The principles for shade practice are on copy slip No. 4.

I would impress upon you the importance of the foregoing instructions, and ask you in your own interests to observe them carefully in all your practice. Applying the foundation principles as outlined above, is the only way that anyone has ever attained a high degree of skill in writing.

### THE COPIES.

Take up the copies in their order and practice each one until you can make it with a fair degree of skill before proceeding to the next. Review the copies frequently but always practise systematically.

Copy slip No. 6 contains letters made from capital stem. They are important factors in the acquirement of a free dashy style of writing.

Copy slips No's. 7, 8 and 9 contain words commencing with every letter in the alphabet. You will observe that the oval exercise forms the basis of every good capital letter. Keep your ideal of writing in sight, and it will not be long before you will reach the summit on which you have fixed your vision.

Copy slips No's. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 contain sentences beginning with the capital alphabet. In speaking of these copies the American Penman says: "We believe the equal of this series of off-hand copies has never appeared in a penmanship paper. They should be studied minutely. They furnish material for almost an endless amount of practice."

Copy slips No's. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 contain signatures. The harmonious curves of the hair lines and the correct crossing of lines must be carefully observed. The shades must be properly distributed and so as to balance the combination. The forms of the letters should be complete and the same as if standing alone. Study, practise, compare and criticise.

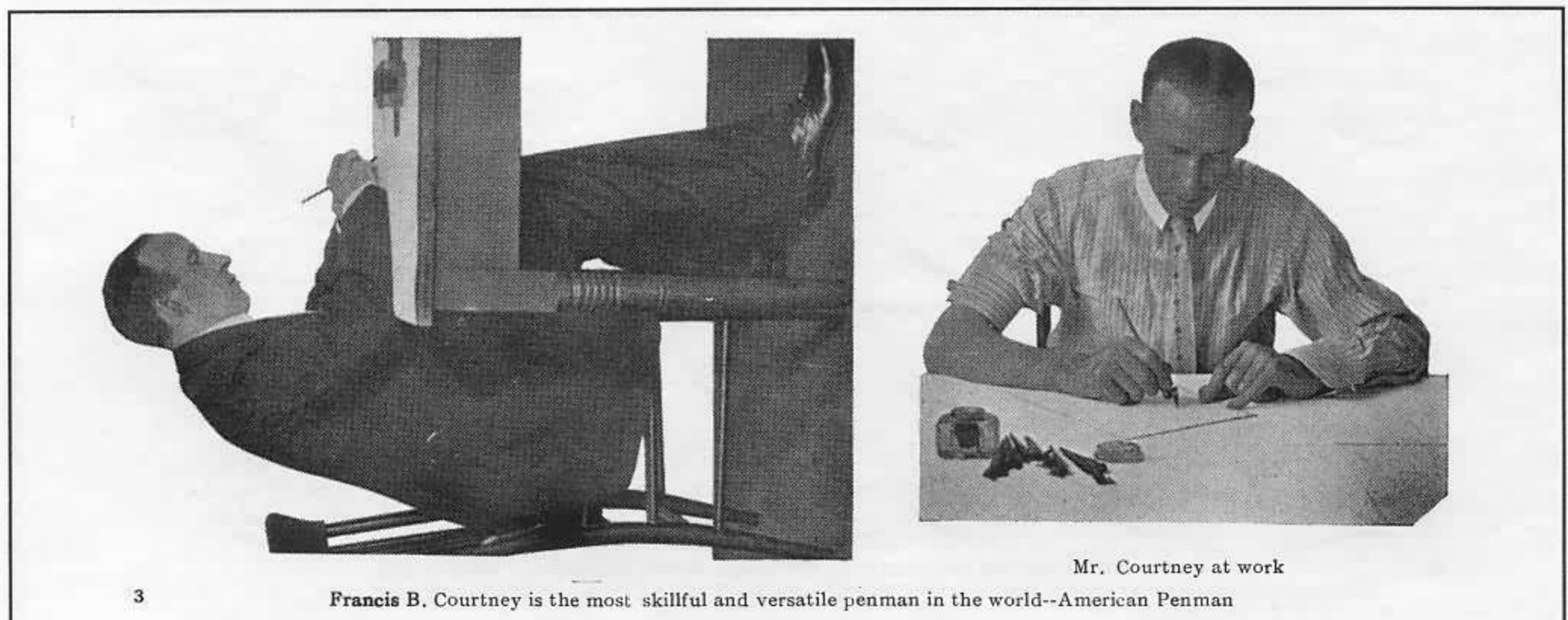
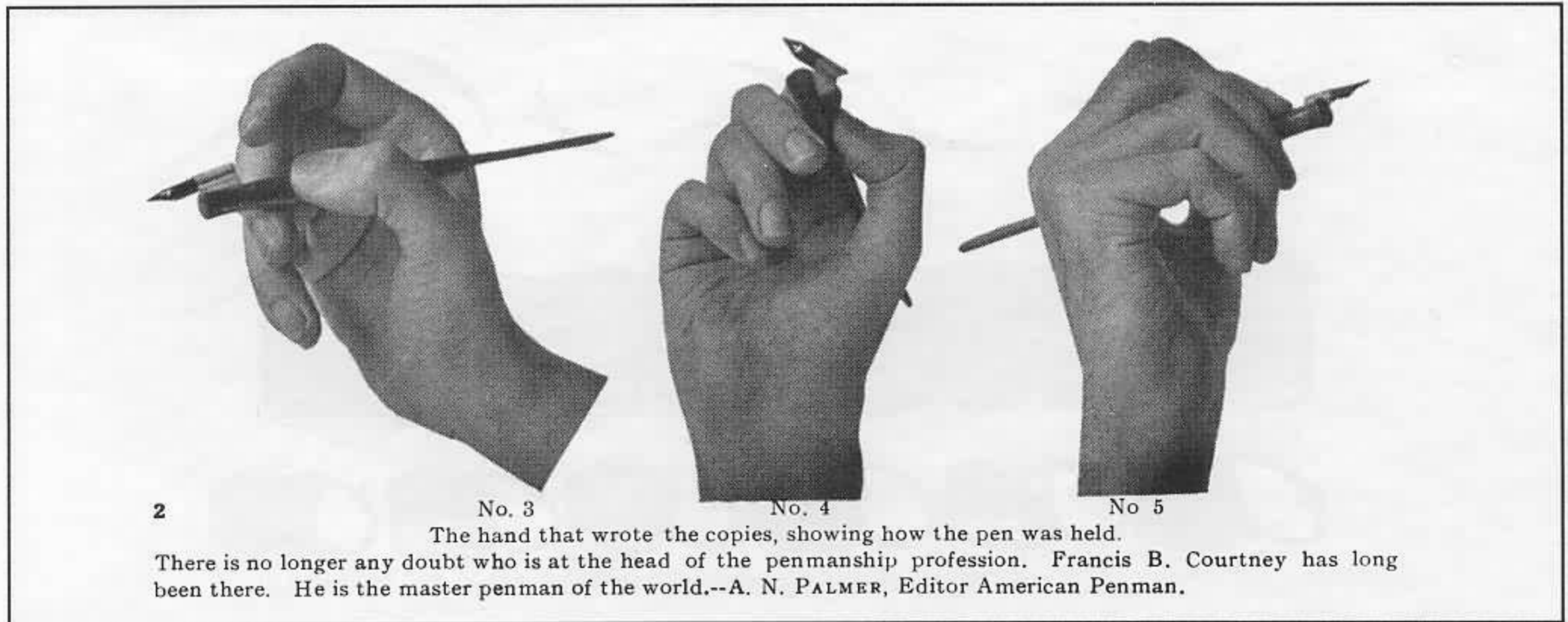
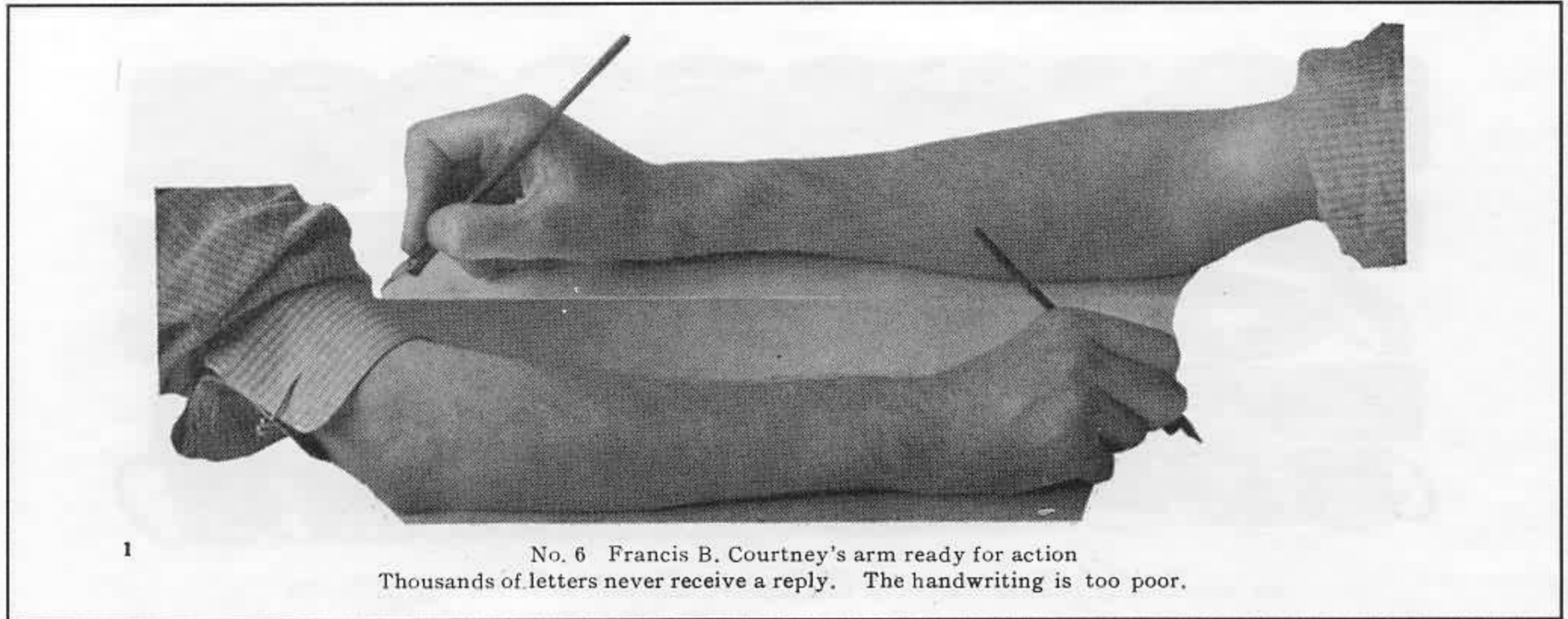
Copy slips No's. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 contain 7 alphabets in one. Here we have the light and shade portrayed. There must be the proper mingling of light and shade or we have no art. One brings out the fine points of the other and relieves the possibility of sameness.

The artist who produces face and form, the landscape painter, who gives us the dreamy moonlight and evening sunset with his brush, is indeed deserving of great praise. But the man who with his trusty pen, produces the flying birds of the air, the swans of the lake, and the penmanship that none can detect from copper plate, deserves to be a recognized equal. For what grander art, what greater accomplishment than to be able to place upon paper a nation's writing that mystifies and charms, and creates much wonder among those who are less able to produce it. Let us then always select the best material, equip ourselves with the best copies that can be produced, and in every stroke that touches the paper change it into a work of art to be admired.

Believe in yourself, believe in your ability, believe me sincerely when I say that the accomplishment of a good handwriting is within the reach of every thoughtful, careful, and industrious student.

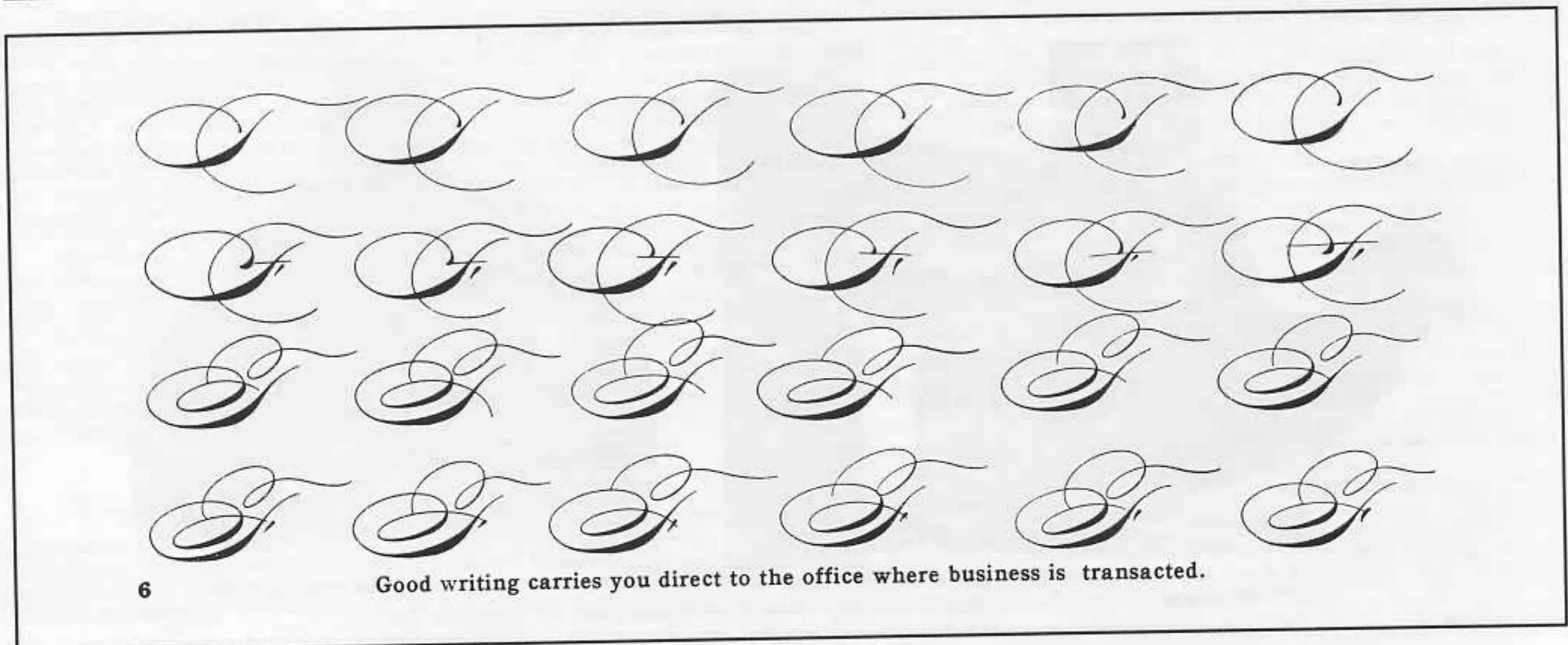
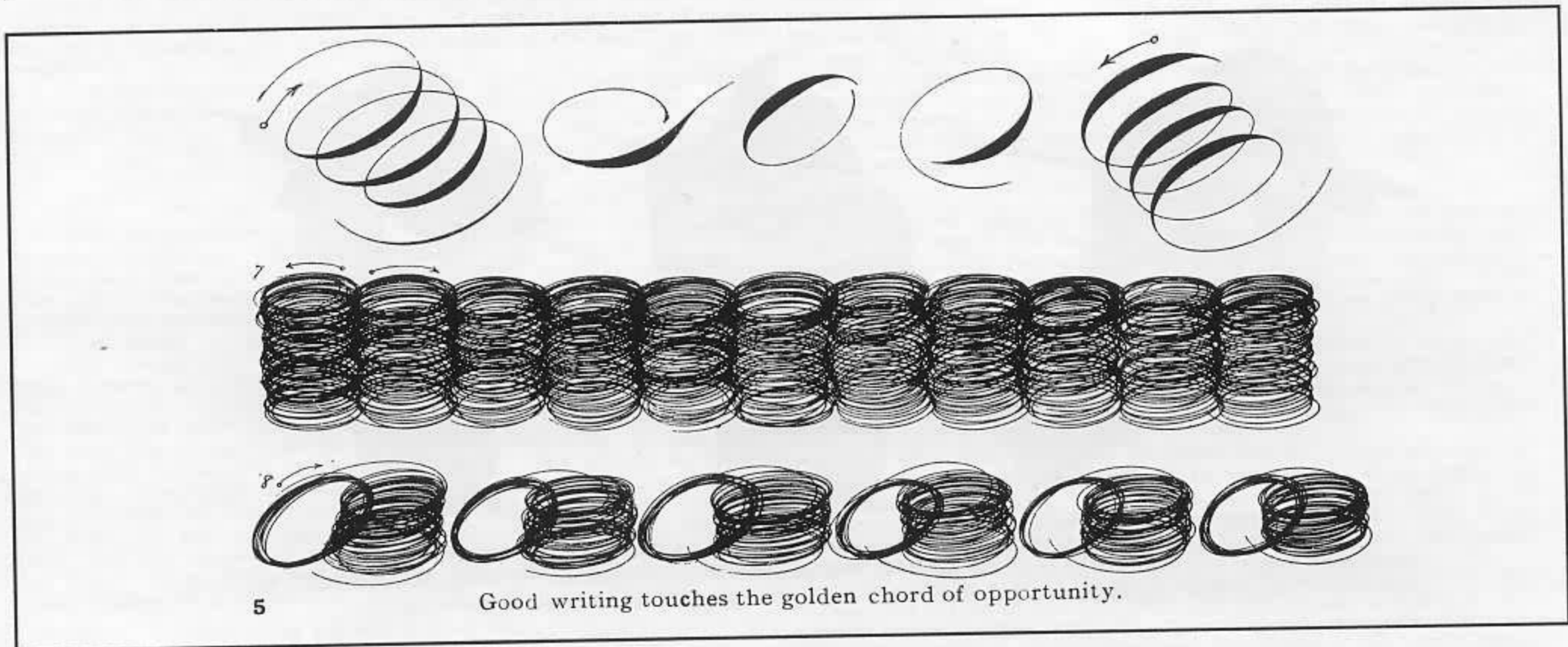
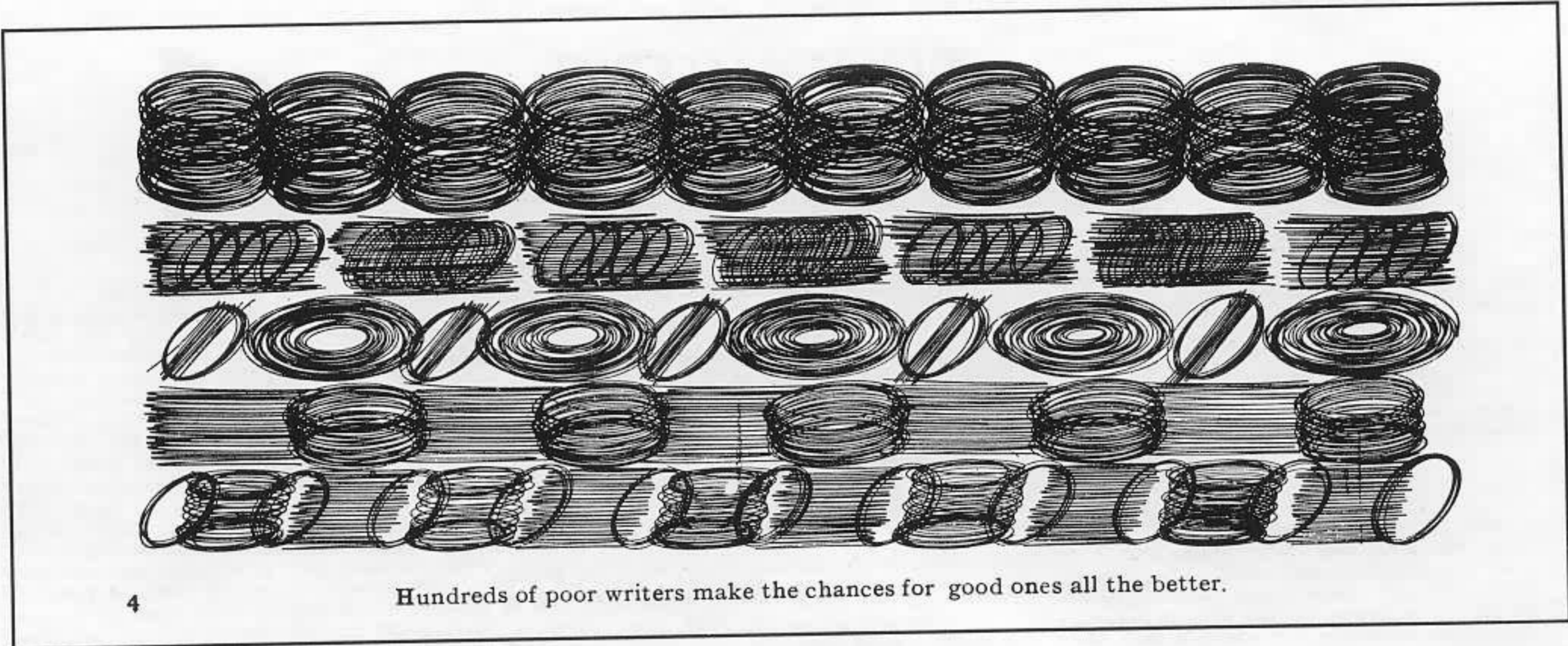
I assume that those who read these suggestions are interested to a certain degree in good handwriting. Practice for it now while the opportunity is ripe. For it may be like the shell on the shore that the traveler sought to reach with his stick, but he waited so long that old Neptune altered his mind and got back his pearl. The waters washed his opportunity from him at a single dash.







APPENDIX 4





Amesport Barrington Cambridge  
 Detroit Eastport Fairmont  
 Gardner Harveysport Indiana

7 Good writing has a value in it that business men appreciate and pay good salaries for.

Jamessport Kearney Louiston  
 Montague Newport Overton  
 Portland Quincy Ravenpoint

8 Good writing is one of the promising ladders by which young men rise in the world. It's a good way.

Sigourney Thornton Uniontown  
 Varney Warren Xenophon  
 Younger Zanzibar Z. Courtney

9 A business man judges the inside by the outside. So he seldom opens poorly written applications



APPENDIX 4

Open has a head and a point  
Busy bees collect honey from flowers  
Cotton velvet is very soft to the feel  
Dollars are our largest silver coins

10 A boy with a poor handwriting is out of tune with hope. He plays discord on the strings of opportunity.

Earthen ware is baked in furnaces  
Forts are surrounded by a moat  
Great haste often makes great waste  
Hard apples keep better than mellow

11 Good writing is the guide to business chances

It is not how much we do but how well  
January the first month of the year  
Knowledge in youth is wisdom in age  
Live goals of fire glow with heat

12 Good chances come thick and fast to good writers.



Millers separate the bran from flour  
 Never envy those who are above you  
 One hundred cents are worth a dollar  
 Polite people please their friends

13

Poor writers have no chance under the scrutinizing eye of the business man.

Quicksilver is heavier than lead  
 Rain will make the ground moist  
 Spring is the first season of the year  
 The miller grinds corn into meal

14

The man with an opportunity to offer doesn't look for the boy with a shaky handwriting to give it to  
 He seeks the best.

Upright and do right make all right  
 Value writing for there is value in it  
 Wheat flour will make good bread  
 Xenophon fixed historical events


15

There is ever ready employment for the young man who can write a good hand.



APPENDIX 4

*You should save the fragments of time  
Youaves always win prizes in drills*



16

Good writing is the nest egg of prosperity that hatches out golden opportunities.

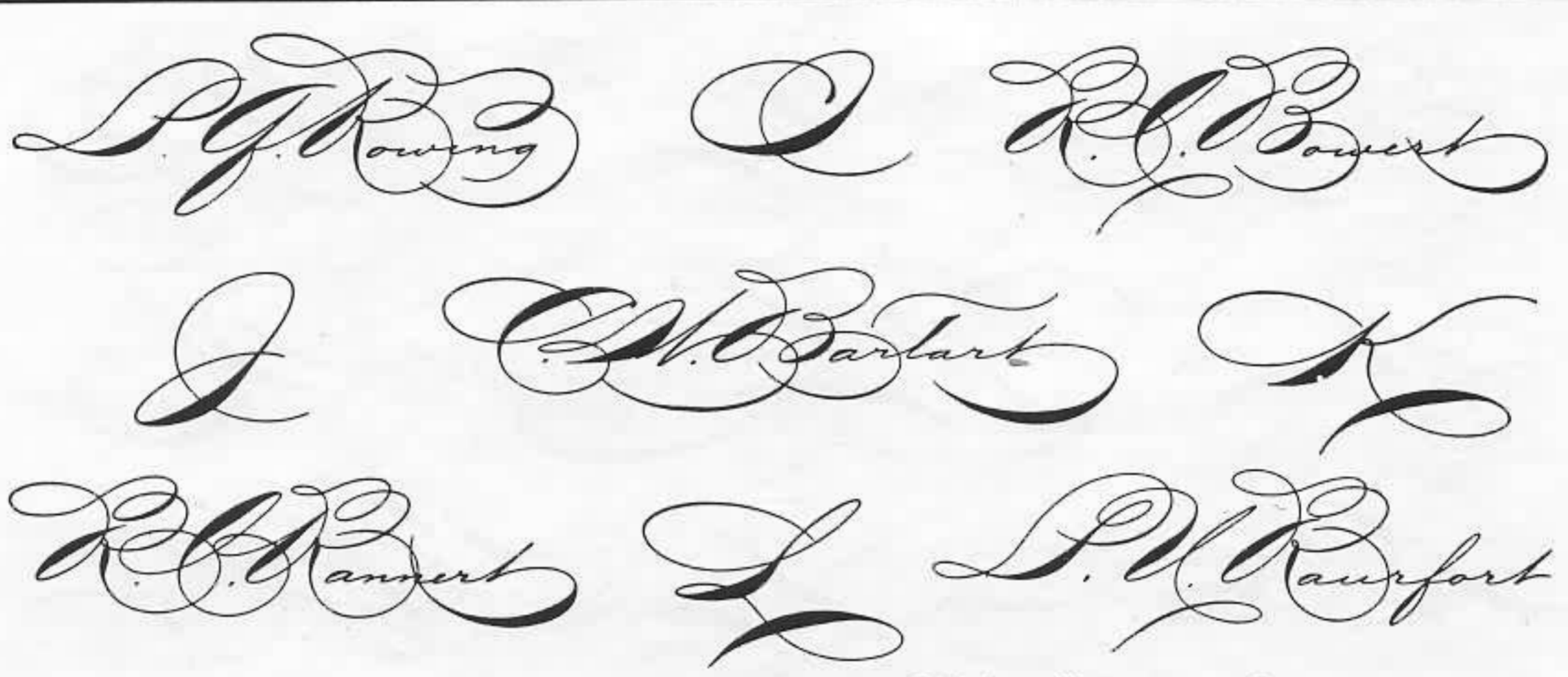
*R. L. Homer*      *L*      *J. C. Boast*  
*B*      *J. A. Rault*      *L*  
*D. H. Harfist*      *L*      *C. H. Thoma*

17 In order to be a candidate for good employment you must be an able candidate. Good writing candidates are the best

*J. A. Rowan*      *L*      *J. H. Tiffert*  
*F*      *J. G. Barrett*      *G*  
*J. O. Rairfert*      *H*      *C. B. Hartert*

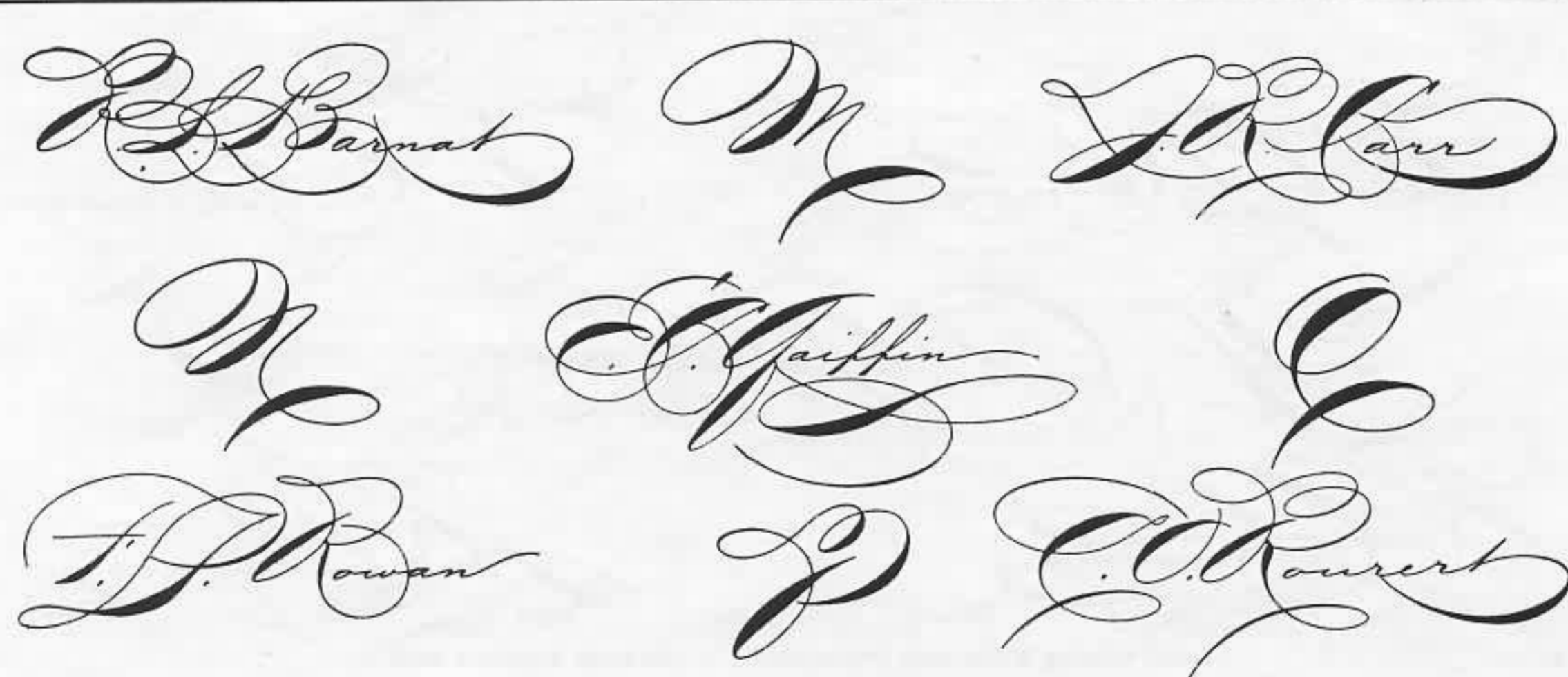
18 When you write a good hand there comes a knock at the door. You are wanted in the business office.





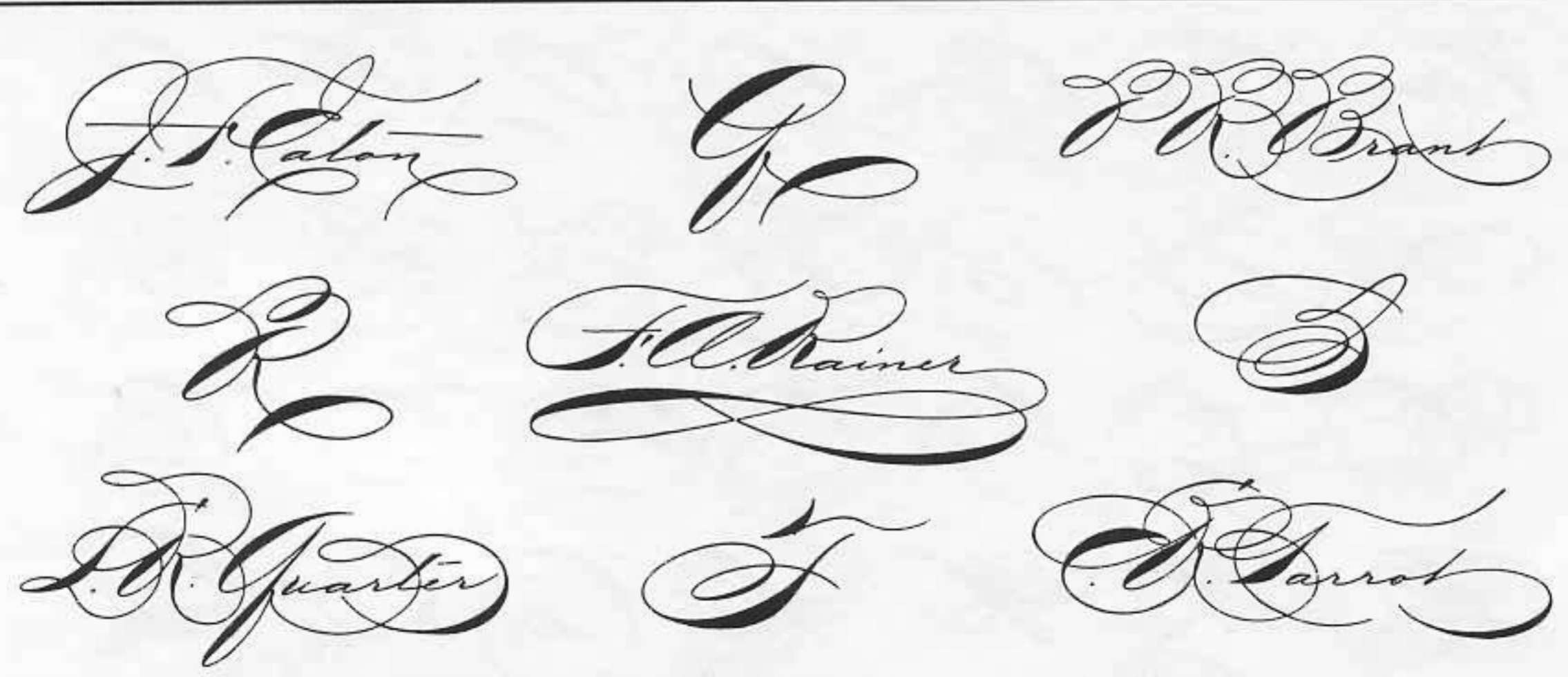
*P. J. Downing*    *C*    *R. L. Bower*  
*I*    *C. W. Bartlett*    *K*  
*R. L. Bower*    *L*    *S. P. Raurfort*

19      Good writing is the foot path to steady employment. It is the guide post to good pay.



*R. L. Barnat*    *M*    *J. R. Carr*  
*W*    *A. Griffin*    *L*  
*J. J. Rowan*    *P*    *C. O. Raurfort*

20      Fine penmanship fits people for positions




*J. S. Eaton*    *G*    *P. R. Brant*  
*R*    *F. L. Rainer*    *S*  
*J. R. Quarter*    *F*    *A. Harrot*

21      Young people applying for positions must possess good writing.




APPENDIX 4



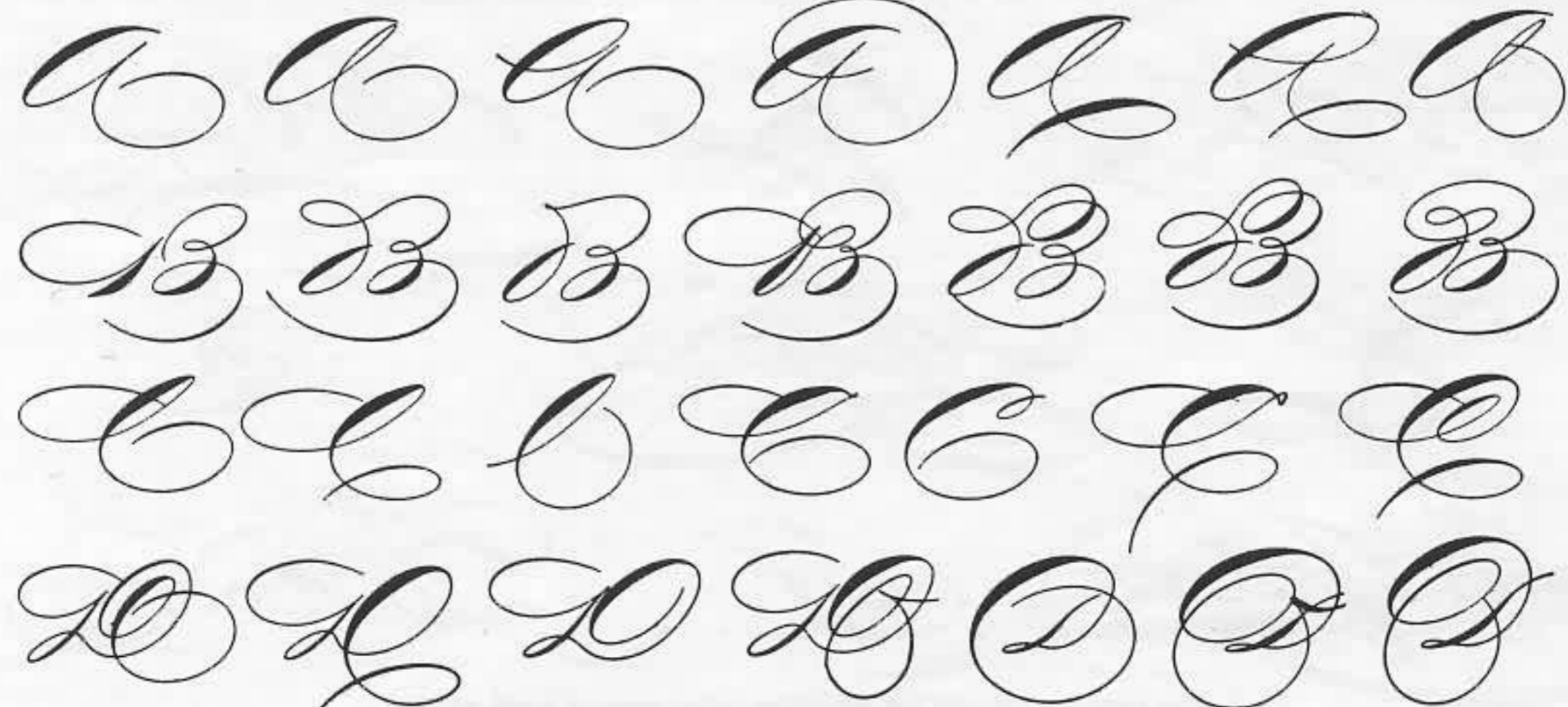
Handwritten signatures and initials in cursive script, including 'H. Fairfax', 'W.', 'R. B. Hunt', 'W.', 'G. W. Carter', 'W.', 'J. C. Rawnet', 'W.', and 'L. Parker'.

22 A good handwriting is a stepping stone to a successful business life



Handwritten signatures and initials in cursive script, including 'W. C. Parney', 'W. C. Parney', 'Y.', 'D. J. Parney', 'J.', 'R. C. Owens', and 'J. R. Parney'.

23 Good writing is the best introduction to the busy business man



Handwritten practice letters in cursive script, showing variations of the letters A, B, C, and D.

24 Improve your chances by improving your penmanship.



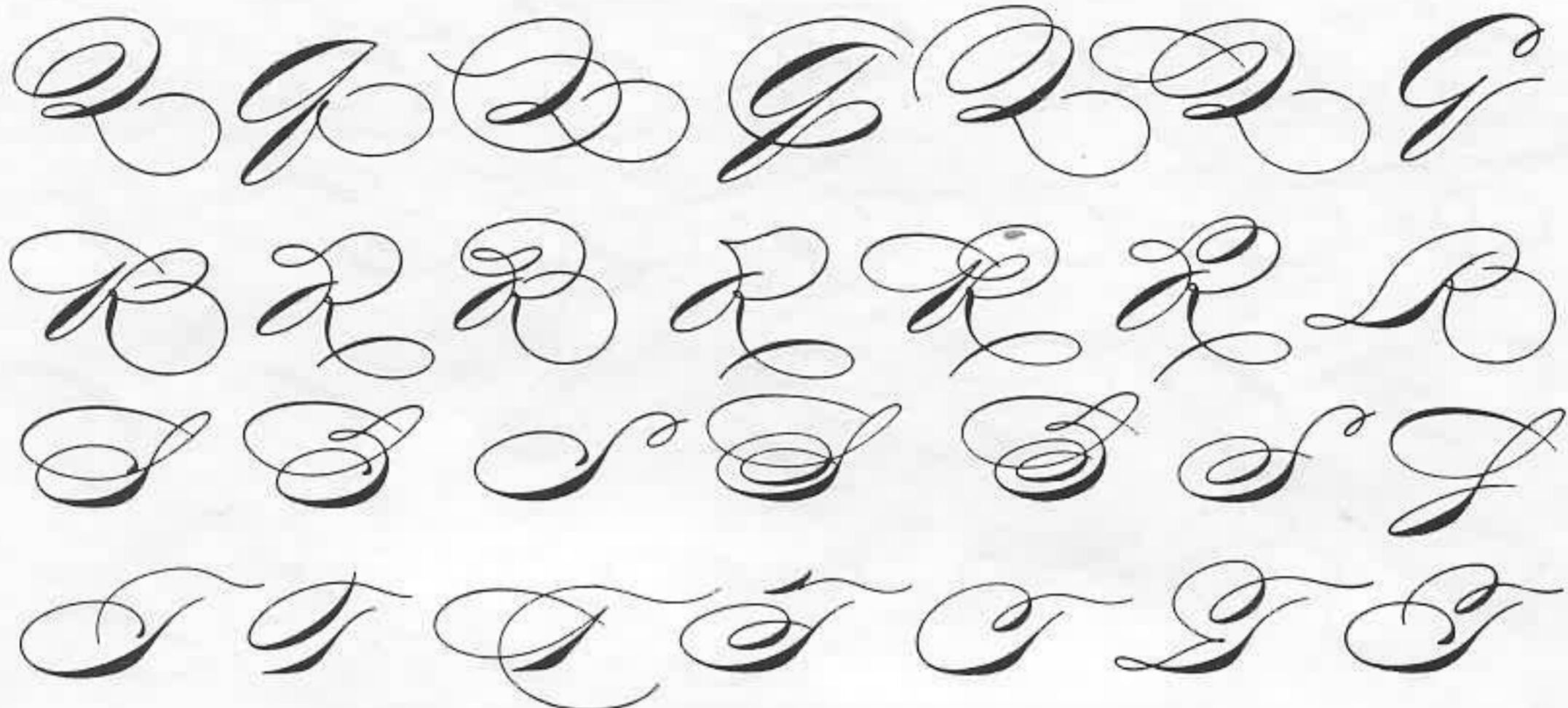
25 Your future position may depend upon your penmanship.

26 Good writing will help you to retain permanent employment.

27 The best and most lucrative positions are tendered those who write well.

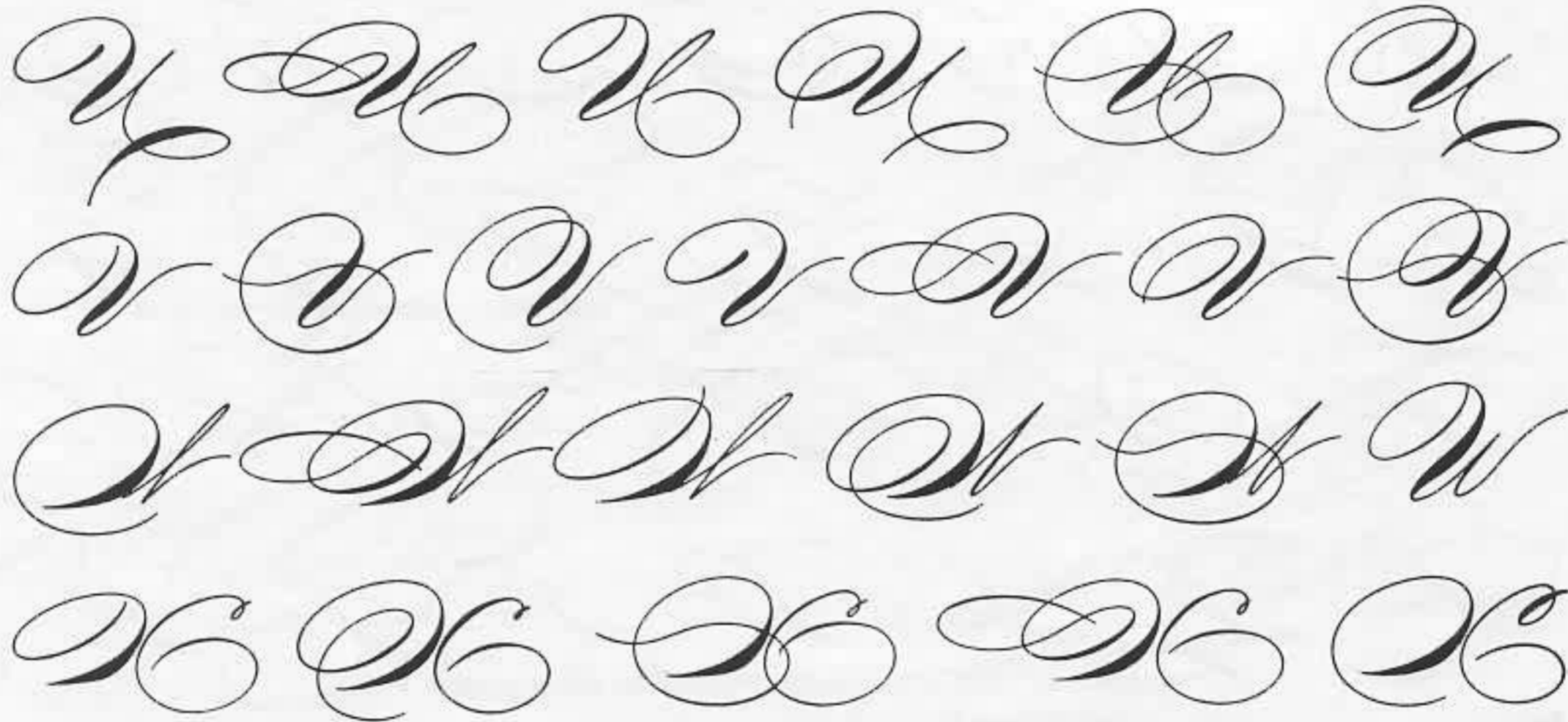


APPENDIX 4



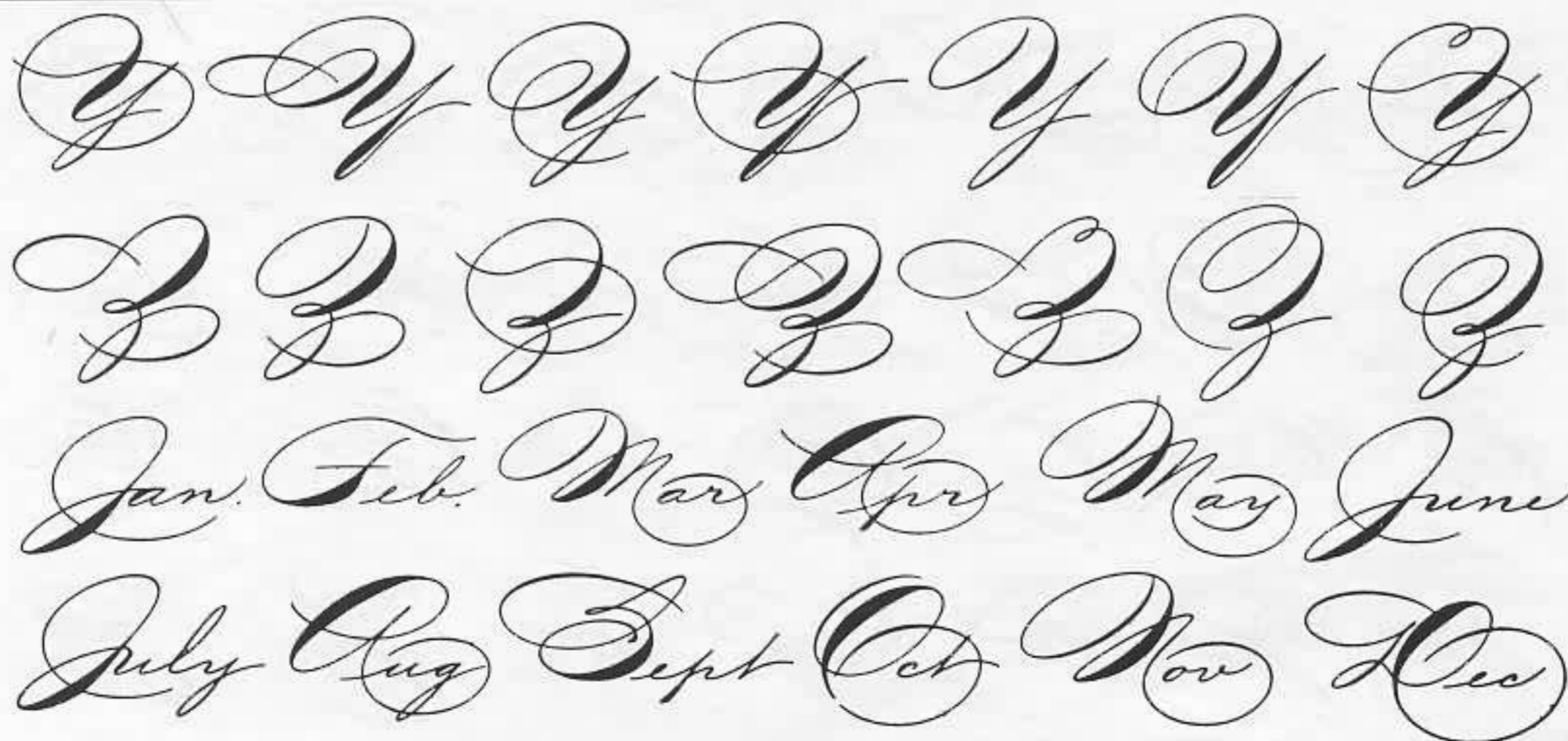
28

Good writing is one of the surest stepping stones to profitable employment.



29

Poor penmanship holds many a young man back



30

Open positions take the best writers.